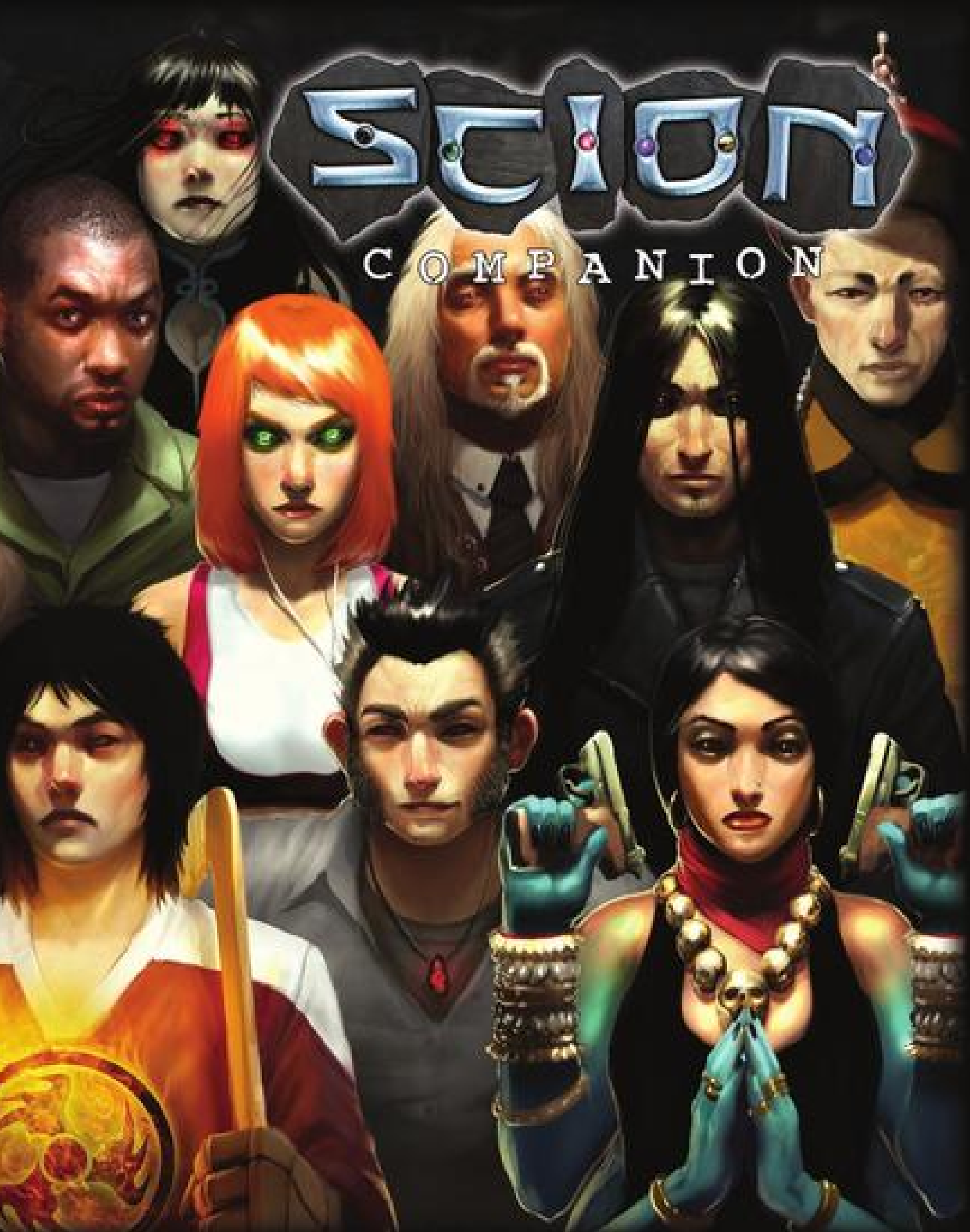
SCION
COMPANION

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SCION: DEMIGOD
Live the Myth

SCION: GOD
Embrace Your Fate

SCION RAGNARÖK
End the World

SCION COMPANION
Master the Unknown

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COMPANION

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INTRODUCTION

This book was cursed. Hell, this *line* was cursed.

I'm not exaggerating when I say that. It even had a name around the office: "the **Scion** Curse." It seemed that every single **Scion** book was plagued with bizarre and unusual delays, complications and obstacles that no other projects seemed to encounter in terms of frequency or originality. I've seen or heard of everything from contracts completely disappearing to strange technical problems that don't show up again and couldn't be duplicated to children being born at inconvenient times to an artist's house getting struck by lightning and losing weeks of work (even sending a picture from his cell phone of the damage the storm caused).

So when it was decided to make the **Scion Companion** an even *more* complicated book to produce, I admit I was nervous about the prospect. The idea was to make the **Companion** into six small sourcebooks (which I ended up calling "parts" instead of "chapters"), and four parts would be released individually as electronic books prior to this book's release. Fans could either buy the parts they wanted for their own games, or purchase a subscription to all four parts, which would be conveniently delivered to them in their email when each part was released. Not only would this mean that we could get new material out to **Scion** fans faster, but it was also a chance to get some of the material reviewed by the fans and possibly revised before the final book was released.

It was a really intriguing idea, and as the newly minted Alternative Publishing Developer at the time, the book was passed off to me to develop. I had some initial conversations with Creative Director Rich Thomas and Scion Line Developer John Chambers, and then proceeded to start work on the book. In retrospect, trying to develop and produce each part one after the other instead of all at once was a mistake; it added a lot of needless complexity to a line that was already cursed with logistical problems. I tried to defy the Gods, and boy did they punish me for my hubris. But I was blessed with a stunningly talented collection of writers, artists and art directors, and the book you're holding is the result of all of that hard work in the face of astonishing odds. Go back to the credits page; every single person there helped make this book happen, and I have a huge debt of gratitude to them.

This is the *second* final book for the **Scion** line. Originally, **Scion** was intended only as a three-book line (to be concluded with **Scion: God**), but response to the game was so incredible that it was decided to do two more books: **Scion: Ragnarök** and the **Scion Companion**. Between its unusual production history and its place as the fifth book of a trilogy, the **Companion** is a unique book at the conclusion of a unique line.

Parts One, Three and Five each cover one of three new pantheons: the **Tuatha Dé Dannan** or Irish Gods, the **Celestial Bureaucracy** or Chinese Gods, and the **Devas** or Hindu Gods. Each of these sections contains everything you'll need to know about these pantheons, including descriptions of the gods of each pantheon, a complete 1 to 10 dot write up of their pantheon Purview, new Birthrights, new allies, new antagonists, details on their Overworld and Underworld, a new Titan that plagues each pantheon and two sample Scions (one hero and one demigod) so players can jump right into the game.

Part Two, **Manifestations of Ichor**, is a collection of new rules for **Scion** players. Included are rules on how to make a demigod or God at character creation, 27 new Knacks (three for each Epic Attribute), 15 new Birthrights (three Creatures, three Followers, three Guides and six Relics), a complete pantheon Purview and Virtues for the Atlantean pantheon first detailed in **Scion: Demigod**, 32 new All-Purpose Purview Boons (two for each Purview) and 10 new Magic spells.

Part Four covers the **Secrets of the World**, a variety of Storyteller suggestions and articles to help expand your **Scion** cycle. There's information on politics between the Gods and their Scions, more information on feats of strength, more equipment and weapons (including new Relics), a new antagonist group (the Order of the Divine Glory), information on Legendary companions for Scions, step-by-step advice on how to create your own pantheons, titanspawn and Relics, and 26 new story ideas for your cycle.

Part Six allows you to put your **Scion** cycle back in time to World War II. **The World at War** covers the history of WWII from a Scion perspective, updated information on three of the original pantheons and the roles they play in the conflict (along with a hero and demigod character), two new pantheons – the Yankee pantheon and the Allied pantheons – complete with sample hero and demigod for each (as well as a full description of each new pantheon's Purview), advice on running a WWII cycle, mass combat rules for **Scion**, and statistics for military equipment.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

As mentioned earlier, this is a collection of parts. Each part in this book was designed to be included into a Scion cycle as needed, with very little reference to the other parts. If you want to play a Scion of the Celestial Bureaucracy but don't want to deal with the Tuatha or the Devas, just flip to Part Three and don't worry about the other pantheons. If you want to use some of the powers in Part Two but not others, take what makes sense and leave the rest. If you like the Yankee pantheon but want to run a modern-day cycle, just bring them forward in time to deal with the titanspawn (and other realities) of the 21st century. This is a toolbox of ideas, tools and inspiration – you can pick just the parts you want to use, or dump them all out on the floor and start putting them together into new and different configurations. Like any good companion, this book tries to be as versatile as possible, so that it might have just the thing you need when you're in a jam or when you want to start moving things around and making some changes.

TUATHA DÉ DANNAN

PART ONE

Morrie glanced down at Lou, her face illuminated by the flickering, buzzing light hanging over the door to the underground locker room. "Last chance to back out," he grunted, lifting a hand to rake long hair, black as raven's feathers, out of his eyes.

Lou shook her head, ruddy curls writhing around her shoulders like snakes. "Nah. Let's do this." The towering figure at her side nodded, and they closed in on the dressing room in silence.

Rusty Carson was a killer with a very public trail of bodies in his wake. His pro football career had ended abruptly when he "accidentally" snapped the neck of a linebacker on the opposing team. His brief time as a wrestler had likewise come to a halt after two opponents in a televised grudge match ended up smothered under his bulk. After that fatal match, he had vanished. It took weeks to track Carson from Chicago to Boston, where he performed in lethal no-holds-barred cage matches in a makeshift arena under the warehouses along the docks.

Three dead men didn't make Carson a titanspawn. Neither did the nine mutilated bodies police found buried under Carson's home. But Carson's string of corpses definitely called for a closer look.

They approached the door cautiously. The hiss of steam from the radiator inside masked quieter sounds, and Lou tensed as the hairs on the back of her neck prickled in warning.

The crash deafened Lou as Carson smashed the steel-cored fire door off its hinges, and she jerked back from the doorway. The door hit the opposite wall hard enough to embed itself in the cracked concrete. The roar of applause and yells from the arena drowned out the sound. Lou guessed that the audience watching men kill each other wouldn't hear the fight taking place below.

"Fee fi fo fum," Carson sneered, snatching at Lou with callused fingers. "I smell the blood of a filthy, ignorant whore of a Scion. Be she alive or be she dead, I'll grind her bones to powder." Before she could dodge, he grabbed her, yanking out a patch of hair with a laugh. She hissed and kicked him, her foot smashing into his chest hard enough to break ribs. He fell back against the wall and rebounded. His skin bubbled as if he had been splashed with acid, and the muscles underneath bulged and rippled. His dirty auburn hair had fallen out, and muddy brown eyes glowed like splashes of white phosphorous. He pushed himself away from the wall and chuckled at the pair, his knuckles popping as they clenched into fists.

Morrie screamed, the sound shrill and painful as his fingers contorted. Their tips transformed into long, black talons as sharp as any knife. With another croak, he hurled himself at Carson. Morrie slammed into him, claws plunging deep into Carson's blistered hide to rip open his skin and rake at the organs inside.

"Bastard," Carson snarled, seizing one of Morrie's hands and squeezing. Lou heard the bones of Morrie's fingers snap like pretzel sticks. "I'll wear your feathered skull for a hat."

Lou's empty hand curled into a fist. When she opened it again, the glittering shaft of Spear Lúin lay in her hand, its silvery head smoking for a second before it burst into flame. Black blood dripped from the razor-edged metal and she howled, charging the pair of them, her eyes slit in concentration as she drove her father's spear up into Carson's chest.

The killer backhanded Morrie, throwing the taller man halfway back down the hall. Shredded gobbets of liver and intestines dripped from the wound in his belly and landed on the floor, the stench of death and shit filling Lou's nostrils. The flesh around the spear's head burst into flame, and Lou allowed herself a brief, satisfied grin.

"Not good enough, little girl," Carson laughed, then grabbed her and yanked her forward to slam his head into her own. The impact stunned her, and he smashed his fist into her belly, knocking her back before tearing the spear from his chest. She dodged as he threw the weapon at her, but before she could retrieve the spear and rush him again, Morrie blew past her, his whole body quaking violently.

Blood. A fine film of it covered him from head to toe. Morrie's chest had swollen to the size of a wooden barrel, and every muscle in his body was inflated to twice its size. His eyes retreated back into his head, and the hair on his head stood on end, fanning out from his scalp like iron spikes.

Morrie slammed into Carson with a guttural bellow, lowering his head at the last minute to slam head-first into the athlete's face. Carson screamed, flailing at the forest of spines that lanced his eyes, mouth and throat as Morrie ripped at his abdomen, carving out more chunks of his innards with each blow.

Lou plucked the spear from where it had fallen, the bright head burning a hole in the old concrete. She leapt high into the air, flourishing its point downward as she descended. The head bit deep into the top of Carson's skull, driving down through his body with a burning hiss. Carson stiffened as Lou's feet hit the ground. A final gurgle escaped him, and the monster went limp.

Lou wrenched the spear out of the bloody corpse and grinned. She knew most people would have thrown up by now, or fainted, or run away. But we're not most people, she thought. We're Scions, and this is what we do. Morrie stepped back, shaking himself, clots of flesh dripping from his talons.

"Monster," she teased him, watching as his misshapen body diminished.

"But a useful one," Morrie countered. "You should have learned the riastrad a long time ago."

Lou glanced down at Carson's crumpled remains on the floor and shrugged. "If my father wants me to know it, he'll teach me," she said. One clench of her fist caused the spear to disappear. "You feel like getting some dinner?"

He sniffed the air, still heavy with Carson's stench. "Barbecue?"

She covered her wince with a smirk. "Sure, why not?"

THE TUATHA
THE IRISH GODS

The Tuatha Dé Dannan ("children of Danu") are the Gods of ancient Ireland, a land with a long history of invasions from outside lands. The Tuatha are warriors, bards, druids and seers, and they esteem honor, courage, intellect, piety, generosity and inspiration. They instill these qualities in the people of Ireland – and especially in their Scions. The Tuatha have given birth to many powerful Scions who have fought the titanspawn alongside the Scions of other pantheons.

HISTORY

The Tuatha came to Ireland from four cities in Tír na nÓg (the Land of Eternal Youth) – Falias, Finias, Gorias and Murias – nearly four thousand years ago. Once they arrived, they decided never to return to their old lands and burned their ships.

When they arrived, Ireland was far from uninhabited. The Tuatha were actually fifth in a line of settlers to Ireland. Some of these invaders were human, while others (like the Tuatha) were more than mortal, ranging from the spirits of the land to the descendants of other Gods. According to the *Lebor Gabala Erenn* (or "Book of Invasions"), the first to settle in Ireland was a race of men before the Biblical Flood, led by a woman by the name of Cessair – supposedly one of the daughters of Noah. The Flood wiped them out, except for one survivor, Fintan mac Bochra, a seer who managed to escape by turning himself into a salmon.

This desecrated area, a land tainted with reeking mud and the decaying corpses of people and animals, gave birth to the fomorians, a race of cruel, hideous and violent Titans that claimed Ireland for their own. Although from time to time the race birthed a throwback that appears human, for the most part the fomorians are deformed and ugly. They are especially skilled at twisting the minds of weak-willed mortals, especially kings and queens, and bending their worship toward darker Gods.

It was over a hundred years before another group of settlers arrived from Sicily and Greece, led by a man named Partholón. These men fought against the fomorians, even defeating small groups of them. But before they could finish off the foul beasts, Partholón and his followers were devastated by a plague and died within a week.

The third group of settlers in Ireland arrived 350 years later, led by a man named Nemed. The Nemedians also fought against the fomorians with some success, but after having banished the remainder of them to the furthest reaches of Ireland, plague rose once again and nearly destroyed them all. After Nemed's death, his followers were enslaved by the fomorians. The fomorians demanded tremendous tributes of food and children from the Nemedians, and it took them over 200 years to rise up against their oppressors. While they managed to slay a number of the fomorians, the titanspawn struck back, wiping the mortals out almost to a man.

The Fir Bolg were the next to take Ireland, arriving there almost 230 years after the Nemedians. The fomorians, who had defeated the men of Nemed but massive casualties of their own in that savage battle, remained in hiding. These titanspawn healed and bred and renewed their numbers, waiting for the day to emerge and once again revel in acts of plunder and slaughter.

Their plans were derailed when the Tuatha arrived in Ireland, claiming the land as their own and going to war with the Fir Bolg over control of it. The Fir Bolg found themselves in a desperate position and allied with the surviving fomorians, who were once again strong enough to enter battle. The Tuatha conquered the Fir Bolg, but their war with the fomorians continues to this day.

One of the weapons the fomorians used against the Tuatha was seduction. Many trysts arose between the fomorians and the Tuatha, and some of the Tuatha's greatest members were conceived through these illicit affairs. Lugh was one such example: his father was a son of Dian Cécht, and his mother was Ethniu, daughter of Balor (the king of the fomorians). Bres, who was king of the Tuatha after Nuada, was another who bore fomorian blood in his veins.

The greatest of the Tuatha's battles against the Fir Bolg were the First and Second Battles of Magh Tuiredh ("Plain of Pillars"). Nuada, first king of the Tuatha, led his people during the First Battle of Magh Tuiredh and was victorious against the Fir Bolg. In the process, however, he lost his hand in a duel against the fomorian champion, Sreng. The Tuatha had a taboo against deformity, and no one could serve as their king who was not physically perfect. Because Nuada was marred, he had to step down as king. The Tuatah chose Bres the Beautiful, himself half-fomorian, as their next king, but the Gods soon regretted it. Bres favored his fomorian father and compelled the Tuatha to labor as slaves. The Dagda was required to dig defensive trenches around the fort where the king dwelled, and the great bard Ogma spent each day chopping firewood. After seven years, the healer Dian Cécht fashioned a replacement hand for Nuada out of silver, and Nuada was restored as king. Bres was exiled, fled to the fomorians for aid and joined forces with Balor against the Tuatha in the Second Battle of Magh Tuiredh.

The fomorians suffered a much graver defeat in this skirmish than they had during the first battle at the Plain of Pillars. It was during this battle that the first Scions of the Tuatha fought alongside their parents in order to help defeat the fomorians and their spawn. Nuada, the Morrigan and Lugh slaughtered wave after wave of enemy warriors, and Lugh wounded Balor so gravely that he went into a coma mistakenly perceived as death. Lugh also found and fought Bres on the battlefield, defeating him and sparing his life on the condition that Bres would teach the Tuatha certain magics that only he knew. Bres acquiesced and was released, but not before reneging on his promise and once again joined the fomorians.

The fomorians that survived the battle went into hiding, waiting for the day when they would regain their strength and at last destroy the Tuatha for good. The fomorians have vowed never to rest until the last of the Tuatha and their Scions have been destroyed and Ireland is theirs once more. More than a few of the fomorians who survived the Second Battle of Magh Tuiredh still live today, taking every chance to hunt down and destroy any Scions of the Tuatha whose paths they may cross.

Relationships with Other Pantheons

The relations the Tuatha have with other pantheons are mixed at best. For example, there were centuries of animosity between the Tuatha and the Aesir dating back to the viking invasions of Ireland, but in recent years the two pantheons have buried the ill will between them in order to better concentrate on killing Titans and titanspawn. Likewise, the Irish ideals of honor and courage, and their distaste for cruelty and evil, often bring them into conflict with the Atzlánti, whose love of bloodshed and human sacrifice reminds the Tuatha of the fomorians they have fought for so long.

Due to the great distance between Ireland and Japan, the Tuatha have had little contact with the Amatsukami until the last century or so. They often find the Gods of Japan strange, but the Japanese dedication to honor and the warrior's code has cast them in a mostly favorable light among the Tuatha.

The Tuatha get along well with the Dodekatheon, the Pesedjet and the Loa for the most part, although from time to time friction between individual Gods in each pantheon does arise. Generally, when difficulties occur, it tends to happen because the Tuatha feel that the other deities are acting in a less-than-Godlike way, especially toward the mortals that worship those Gods. The Tuatha feel very responsible for their own mortal followers, and it always astonishes them when other Gods and Goddesses treat their worshippers poorly.

Enemies and Allies of the Pantheon

The main enemies of the Tuatha are the fomorians, a race of titanspawn native to Ireland. The fomorians are huge, deformed, vicious and hideous in the extreme. Used to dining on human flesh, they know neither mercy nor love. The fomorians' children are also the Tuatha's foes, and the Children of Danu don't waste a chance to eradicate these beasts without mercy.

The Tuatha also fought the Milesians, a group of mighty warriors who arrived in Ireland after the Tuatha. The first Milesians were led by a man named Íth, but this group was killed by the armies of the three co-ruling kings of Ireland: Mac Cuill, Mac Cecht and Mac Gréine. The eight sons of Íth's brother Mil raised a greater invasion force to avenge their uncle, and they landed their ships at County Kerry, managing to drive their men all the way to Tara, the seat of kings. There they were met by the Tuatha, who understood that a war between themselves and the mighty army of the Milesians would tear Ireland apart. The Tuatha struck a bargain: the Milesians would sail their ships a specified distance from the coast while the Tuatha used their magic to raise a vicious storm. If the Milesians could pilot their ships safely through the storms to the shore, the Tuatha would give way, and Ireland would belong to the Milesians. Five of Íth's nephews died in the storm when their ships sank, but the remaining three landed safely, and the Tuatha withdrew from the mortal plane to let Ireland be ruled by men. Today, the descendants of the Milesians have become the people of Ireland, and the Tuatha have forgiven their hostility with them.

THE PANTHEON

Virtues: Courage, Expression, Intellect, Piety

The Tuatha dé Dannan were born out of the violent, primal times of early Ireland. They came to power by defeating all who came before them and have guided the people of Ireland for a period of almost four thousand years. When the greatest threats were defeated, they elected to retreat from the World to Tír na nÓg, the Land of Eternal Youth, and guided the people of Ireland from there.

Like the Aesir (whom they most closely resemble and to whom they are in closest geographical proximity), the Tuatha are a noble lot, fierce-tempered and proud. No insult to their honor goes unavenged, and no crime against their people is ever forgotten. Personal responsibility and independence are both of vital importance to the Tuatha. Cowards, weaklings and shirkers are dealt with harshly. Artistic ability is also highly prized among the Tuatha. Music, poetry and storytelling are all respected and valued by the Tuatha, whether the person so gifted is one of the members of their own pantheon, another pantheon or a mortal. Some of the oldest recorded epics found in Irish literature are the stories of the Tuatha and their deeds, especially their war against the fomorians.

Fate is a matter the Tuatha view with equal parts reverence and dread. Unlike other pantheons, there are no deities among them who personify the workings of Fate. Although it may be shaped and nudged with the geasa, all the Tuatha know that no one may escape their fate, and so it weighs heavily on their minds. While hot tempers and quick wits may spur them to impulsive acts, rare is the Goddess or God that undertakes any deed that reflects poorly against them. They know that, at any time, the strands of Fate may twist and bring about their end, and no one among the Tuatha wishes to go to her end with a slate blackened by crimes committed on a whim. This thought is behind the Tuatha's drive during the last few centuries to make peace with other pantheons they had previously fought against.

The main weaknesses of the Tuatha are their overconfidence and their inability to accept that sometimes their goals can be carried out through quiet, discreet methods instead of flashy, loud ones. The Tuatha believe that there is no feat they and their Scions cannot accomplish, even though history can offer up numerous examples to the contrary. Likewise, the ancient Gods and Goddesses of Ireland are not known for stealth, subterfuge or quiet manipulation. Battles were fought with each Goddess and God shouting war-cries at the top of their lungs, and the Tuatha see little reason that things should change.

The Tuatha's Scions these days find themselves seeking out the titanspawn that commit some of the most grisly and appalling crimes against mortals. Serial killings, mutilations, the desecration of holy places and even genocide are all things that the Scions of the Tuatha seek to end. They understand the toll that such crimes take on mortal minds and souls, weakening the fabric of reality and allowing the Titans a greater foothold in the mortal world. If the Scions can convince mortals to work with them in these endeavors, awakening the heroic spirit in them as they did in ancient Ireland, so much the better.

For the most part, the Tuatha treat their Scions well. While they constantly push their Scions to grow stronger and strive for ever-greater deeds in battle, they are not stingy with praise or gifts. Hospitality is a sacred duty amongst the Tuatha, and they are generous when it comes to handing out Birthrights. Swords, spears and other weapons are the most commonly gifted, but there is no shortage of non-armament rewards, such as cauldrons, harps, steeds and companions. But the Scions must prove themselves worthy of those gifts, and terrible is the reckoning if they do anything to dishonor the Birthrights they have been given. Awful tales have been told of Scions stripped of everything granted them when found guilty of not living up to their patrons' expectations.

AENGUS

AKA: Aengus Og, Mac Ind Og, Mac Og

Description: Aengus is the most beautiful of the Tuatha. His long blond hair, vibrant blue eyes and delicately-sculpted features are enough to make men and women alike swoon in envy and desire. He has the lithe frame of a fencer or gymnast, rather than the heavily-muscled form of his father, the Dagda. Aengus is the God of youth, love and poetic inspiration, and he delights in embodying the first and spreading the other two as far and wide as possible.

Aengus is better known for feats of manipulation than deeds in battle. He was able to trick his father into giving him the Brú na Bóinne, the Dagda's own home, through a play on words. He is associated with birds, especially swans, and the birds that used to circle his head in a rapturous delight at the sight of his beauty have transformed today into the rows of Xs that lovers write to each other at the end of their letters.

In modern life, Aengus can be found wherever he has the greatest chance to inspire love or to prove his wits. He has been the host of a highly-rated daytime talk show and a sex therapist, a high-stakes gambler and a persuasive lawyer.

The Scions of Aengus are always beautiful and in the peak of health. The can be found in any profession where beauty and a silver tongue are in high demand – as attorneys, salesmen, models, actors and politicians. While they are better negotiators than warriors, more than one Scion of Aengus has ended a fight by talking rings around a less clever foe until more physically powerful allies could arrive.

Associated Powers: Animal (Birds), Enech, Epic Appearance, Epic Charisma, Epic Manipulation, Health

Abilities: Animal Ken, Art, Empathy, Medicine, Occult, Presence

Rivals: Aphrodite, Artemis, Hel, Izanami, Tlazoltéotl

BRIGID

AKA: Brid, Bríg, Brigantia, Breo Saighead

Description: Brigid not only fills the roles of maiden, mother and crone, but she is also the patron Goddess to smiths, healers and poets. Worshipped for centuries at the holy well in Kildare by a group of women who tended her perpetual flame, Brigid is associated with both water and fire – and not just the element of fire, but *imbas* (the "fire of inspiration") that is the life-blood of musicians, poets and storytellers. Brigid is a tall, beautiful woman with hair as red as flames, eyes as gray as smoke and a scattering of freckles across her fair skin. She is stronger than she appears, untiring in the smithy and in battle.

These days, Brigid appears as a doctor, an edgy poet at poetry slams, a worker in a steel mill, a creative-writing teacher helping gifted students and a vet's assistant. She loves positions where she can inspire people in what they do, whether that might be writing the Great American Novel or simply overseeing the Detroit foundry furnaces for the latest batch of automobile parts.

Brigid's Scions are usually creative, charismatic, healthy people with an interest in the arts or healing. They tend to be calm, compassionate and good with their hands, with steady nerves and unwavering dedication. Her children serve equally as doctors or sculptors, nurses or musicians, paramedics or poets.

Associated Powers: Animal (Swan), Enech, Epic Stamina, Epic Strength, Fire, Health, Water

Abilities: Art, Craft, Empathy, Integrity, Medicine, Melee

Rivals: Apollo, Loki, Sobek, Tlaloc, Xipe Totec

THE DAGDA

AKA: The Good God, Eochaid Ollathir, Ruadh Rofhessa

Description: Son of Danu, the Dagda is known for his prodigious appetites for food, sex and battle. He had numerous lovers and wives, including the Morrigan. He also fathered Aengus with Boann, Nuada's wife. The Dagda served as king of the Tuatha after Lugh for eighty years. It was during his reign that the Tuatha faced some of their fiercest battles with the fomorians.

The Dagda owns a number of magical treasures, including a harp that directs the order of a battle, a cauldron that can feed an army and a club that can kill nine men with a single stroke. The Dagda is a warrior, first and foremost, and has been battling the Titans and their spawn for centuries. He firmly believes that his ways are the best, and if you disagree, he will tell you exactly why you are wrong, whether you are a man or a God.

The Dagda spends a great deal of time in the mortal world these days, spreading his seed and fathering more Scions. Disguised as a mortal, he is as at home in a professional boxing ring as he is tending pigs on a farm. He has been a senator, an Olympic weightlifting champion and a biker either willing to drink you under the table or mop the floor with you. No matter where he goes, he makes friends and enemies in equal measure.

Scions of the Dagda are as larger than life as their father. They are big drinkers, big eaters, big brawlers and big lovers, and their friends rarely have any complaints. Some who favor the Dagda's guardian tendencies work as police officers and firemen. Others become athletes – usually wrestlers, weightlifters and boxers. Those who inherit his charisma are drawn to more social professions – actors, politicians and salesmen gifted enough to sell steak to a vegetarian.

Associated Powers: Animal (Pigs), Enech, Epic Charisma, Epic Stamina, Epic Strength, Guardian, War

Abilities: Animal Ken, Command, Fortitude, Melee, Presence, Thrown

Rivals: Horus, Huitzilopochtli, Odin, Ogoun, Tezcatlipoca, Zeus

DANU

AKA: Ana, Anu, Dana, Danand

Description: There would be no Tuatha Dé Danaan without Danu. Danu is the mother of the Dagda, Dian Cécht and Nuada, and through them she is the original ancestress of all the Tuatha. As one of the earliest Irish Goddesses, she is associated with the primal waters of creation and the fertile earth of Ireland. She is considered the most powerful guardian of Ireland, and all creatures that live there are under her protection. Most often seen as a beautiful, if somewhat distant, woman with light blond hair and sky blue eyes. There is nothing that happens within her country's borders that escapes her attention, and no torment suffered by her people is endured without her resilience and guidance.

Danu is seldom seen in the mortal world these days. When she is, it is almost always as a mother figure of some sort – nurse, midwife, nanny, teacher. From time to time, she will take on the role of gardener or veterinarian, but this is rare. She never takes on any role that requires her to cause harm. Her gentle nature abhors violence, and she would rather shield someone under her care from danger by taking attacks meant for them upon herself.

Danu's Scions are quiet, calm, keen-eyed and patient. Their strength is more often expressed through acts of endurance than violence. Though they can and will fight when they absolutely must (usually to protect innocents), they prefer to follow their patron's example and refrain from physical fights. Whether running a shelter for battered women, serving as an

advocate for abused children, protesting the senseless slaughter of dolphins in tuna nets or working with environmental scientists to cleanse polluted soil of industrial toxins, the Scions of Danu are among the gentlest of the Tuatha.

Associated Powers: Enech, Epic Perception, Epic Stamina, Earth, Fertility, Guardian, Water

Abilities: Animal Ken, Awareness, Command, Empathy, Fortitude, Integrity

Rivals: Baron Samedi, Hera, Osiris, Raiden, Tlazoltéotl

DIAN CÉCHT

AKA: None known

Description: God of healing, son of the Dagda and grandfather of Lugh, Dian Cécht is best known for his creation of a silver hand for Nuada. The silver hand worked every bit as well as the original, but because the Tuatha could not have a king who was physically imperfect, Dian Cécht's son Miach and his daughter Airmed (other members of the Tuatha with great healing abilities) worked seven years to grow Nuada a new hand of flesh. This so incensed Dian Cécht that he killed his own son and scattered a profuse amount of healing herbs over the four corners of the World.

Dian Cécht usually appears as an older man in his fifties, with long white hair held back by a headband and a neatly-trimmed white beard and mustache. Unlike some of the great warriors among the Tuatha, he is not exceptionally muscular but has the greatest hand-eye dexterity among his companions. His skill with crafting and metalwork can be seen in the silver hand he created for Nuada, and although his skill with medicinal herbs is not as great as his daughter's, he still knows which ones can be eaten, which can be used to heal and which are poisonous.

Dian Cécht does not visit the mortal world as often as some of the rest of the Tuatha. He still broods over his son's death and knows his temper has not cooled since the ancient days. When he spends time there, he is almost always to be found in a hospital, clinic or medical corporation designing new prosthetics for amputees. Whether he works as an E.R. doctor, an oncologist, a virologist or a burn specialist, he labors tirelessly to eradicate pain, disease and suffering wherever he finds it. He is one of the few members of the Tuatha with little skill in the arts of war.

The Scions of Dian Cécht are almost exclusively found among the medical fields. Nurses, doctors, paramedics, orderlies and developers of new drugs are all counted among his children. They tend to be driven and devoted people, all too aware of the damage done to fragile mortals by the titanspawn they fight and ready in a pinch to provide what help they can to their more martial brethren.

Associated Powers: Enech, Epic Dexterity, Epic Intelligence, Epic Perception, Health, Magic, Water

Abilities: Craft, Empathy, Medicine, Occult, Presence, Survival

Rivals: Apollo, Damballa, Hephaestus, Isis, Miclántecuhtli

LUGH

AKA: Lámhfhada, Samhildánach, Lonnbeimnech

Description: The grandson of Dian Cécht, great-grandson of the Dagda and fostered by Manannán mac Lír, Lugh is the patron God of versatility. Although the Tuatha contain many Gods, only the greatest were admitted to the highest levels that ruled over Ireland. Lugh came to the door of King Nuada's hall and was told he could not join them unless he showed perfection in some skill. A warrior, a harper, a smith, a poet, a historian, a sorcerer and a craftsman, Lugh demonstrated each of these talents, only to be told that the King's hall already contained Gods who could each do these things. Lugh asked whether any of these Gods could do all of them and was granted membership. A tall, leanly-muscled man, Lugh is precise in his actions and as swift-witted as he is quick-footed. He is also one of the most charming and handsome of the Tuatha, with a short halo of dark auburn curls and green eyes that are usually full of cheer. Only in battle do they turn dark with steely resolve. Like some others among the Tuatha, Lugh is half-fomorian: his mother was Ethniu, daughter of the fomorian king Balor, and his father was Cian, one of the sons of Dian Cécht.

In modern times, Lugh has appeared as a musician, a soldier, a history professor, an author and a creator of fine jewelry. Even people who meet him briefly don't forget him, and he makes friends with ease.

Lugh's Scions tend to have worked a wide array of jobs during their lives and can draw on a large number of skills picked up at different times. They also tend to be charming, athletic and travel a lot. His best-known Scion was Cúchulainn, probably the most famous hero ever to come out of Ireland. Lugh gave Cúchulainn the battle-frenzy known as the *ríastrad* (pp. 18-20), which made him nearly unbeatable in battle. Unfortunately, it also made it impossible for Cúchulainn to tell friend from foe. Since that time, Lugh has taught the warp-spasm to others among the Tuatha, and they in turn may teach it to their Scions.

Associated Powers: Animal (Dog), Enech, Epic Charisma, Epic Dexterity, Epic Wits, Guardian, Health, Illusion, Magic, Sky, War

Abilities: Art, Athletics, Integrity, Melee, Occult, Thrown

Rivals: Loki, Tezcatlipoca, Tlazoltéotl, Kalfu, Set

MANANNÁN MAC LIR

AKA: Mannan beg mac y Leir, Manandan mac Alloit

Description: Manannán was adopted into the Tuatha when the pantheon arrived in Ireland, but he comes from a much older pantheon whose name

has been lost to history. He is the God of the sea and the ferryman that conducted the souls of the dead from the lands of the living to Tír na nÓg. Manannán is also known as a trickster God, whose pranks can be violent enough to cause harm but always teach a valuable lesson. He serves as foster father to Lugh and came to his aid when Lugh helped the rest of the Tuatha overthrow Bres, the corrupt half-fomorian king who ruled the Tuatha after Nuada. Manannán is also associated with horses and owns a magical steed named Enbarr that can cross water just as swiftly as it can race over land.

Manannán usually appears as a white-bearded, hoary old man, somewhat shorter than the rest of the Tuatha, with faded blue eyes and a wry smile. He is fond of seducing young women and has no compunctions whatsoever about taking on a younger, more handsome form to do so. He is an accomplished shape-changer and has been known to assume the form of a woman's lover or husband in order to seduce her.

Manannán has taken to a variety of roles in modern times. As comedian or gigolo, funeral director or fisherman, card sharp or jockey, he is always found with a smirk on his lips, a twinkle in his eye and a spring in his step.

Manannán's Scions are best known for their sense of humor and their quick wits. They come from all walks of life, but large numbers of them gravitate to professions involving the ocean or death. Navy personnel, oceanographers, merchant marines and underwater photographers are as likely as forensic pathologists, gravediggers, cemetery caretakers and even serial killers (who often end up choosing their victims from the ranks of those who serve titanspawn).

Associated Powers: Animal (Horses), Death, Enech, Epic Manipulation, Epic Wits, Illusion, Magic, Prophecy, Psychopomp, Water

Abilities: Animal Ken, Athletics, Brawl, Control, Investigation, Occult

Rivals: Amaterasu, Hades, Hera, Miclántecuhtli, Shango, Tyr

THE ILLUSION PURVIEW

Both Lugh and Manannán are associated with the Illusion Purview detailed in **Scion: Ragnarök**. Storytellers who don't have access to that book can use the "quick and dirty" jotun illusions on p. 270 of **Scion: Demigod** (adding a number of automatic successes equal to the character's dots in Illusion instead of their Legend), or simply ignore the use of this Purview in their cycle.

THE MORRIGAN

AKA: Morrígu, Nemain, Mor-Ríoghain, Babd, Macha, Phantom Queen, the Washer at the Ford

Description: No one who looks upon the face of the Morrigan comes away unchanged by it. Feared even by her fellow Tuatha, her dreadful reputation in battle is legendary. She appears most often as a lean, gray hag with iron strength and a wiry frame, and if she is seen in battle, she is usually soaked from head to foot in the blood of her foes. There are no weapons the Morrigan is not expert with, though her favorites are spear and sword. She can be beautiful, too, as when she appeared to the hero Cúchulainn to try to seduce him before the Second Battle of Moy Tura. With black or red hair and flashing eyes, her enchanting figure in this guise is tied to her role as a fertility figure. She is associated with cattle, a common fertility symbol in Irish mythology, but more traditionally with ravens, crows and other corvids. She can take the form of a crow or raven and is often found flying over battlefields, surveying the damage and descending to feast on the bodies of the dead. Among the Tuatha, the Morrigan is considered their greatest seer, especially adept at predicting the outcomes of battles and the deaths of men in war.

The Morrigan can still be found on battlefields to this day, either as a soldier or as someone removing the dead bodies so they can be tagged, bagged and sent back home for burial. She has been known to appear as a martial arts instructor, a fortune-teller (inevitably seeing gloom and doom for those who come to have her read their cards or their palm), a dealer in black-market arms and an animal rehabilitator working with injured ravens, rooks and crows.

The Morrigan's Scions are among the fiercest, toughest and cruelest members of their kind. Strong, cold and used to both physical and emotional punishment, they can take nearly everything that gets thrown at them and come back for more. Whether they are found in the Special Forces, a zoo's avian exhibit office or at a mixed martial arts championship, there are very few Scions (or titanspawn, for that matter) who can best them when it comes to sheer power, determination and lack of mercy.

Associated Powers: Animal (Corvids), Animal (Cattle), Chaos, Death, Enech, Epic Appearance, Epic Strength, Fertility, Prophecy, War

Abilities: Animal Ken, Brawl, Fortitude, Marksmanship, Melee, Thrown

Rivals: Ares, Odin, Quetzalcoátl, Raiden, Tyr

NUADA

AKA: Airgetlám, Elcmar, Nechtan, Nodens, Nudd

Description: The first King of the Tuatha Dé Danaan, Nuada ruled even before the pantheon came to Ireland. Tall, powerful, charismatic and the finest warrior of his people, Nuada led the Tuatha against the

Fir Bolg and the fomorians, and he lost a hand in a duel with Sreng, the fomorian champion. He had to step down as king due to a Tuatha taboo which stated that no man could be king who was physically imperfect. His hand was eventually replaced, first with one of silver by Dian Cécht and then with a flesh-and-blood hand regrown for him by Dian Cécht's son Miach.

Nuada is tall, powerfully muscled and extremely handsome, the absolute ideal of a warrior-king of the Tuatha. He has long blond hair held back from his face with a ribbon and piercing green eyes that can see for miles. He is adept with every weapon and is considered the guardian of all Ireland. Nuada is the ultimate arbiter of justice in all cases brought before him, especially despising those who are cowardly, morally weak and cruel.

In modern times, Ireland has no king, and Nuada is more apt to be found in other venues where justice, leadership and warrior prowess are valued. He has been a prosecuting attorney and a judge, a police officer and a public defender, a politician and a soldier.

Nuada's Scions are likely to follow his footsteps, and many favor the professions of law and law enforcement. They may be found among the members of the armed forces and police officers of many nations. Those of a more independent nature may end up running for public office with progressive platforms, teaching martial arts to disadvantaged people in crime-ridden neighborhoods, joining vigilante organizations that prevent crime in big-city subways or acting as bodyguards that protect women who brave the screaming picket lines at women's health clinics.

Associated Powers: Enech, Epic Charisma, Epic Strength, Epic Perception, Guardian, Justice, War

Abilities: Athletics, Command, Integrity, Melee, Presence, Thrown

Rivals: Apollo, Huitzilopochtli, Loki, Ogoun, Set

OGMA

AKA: Oghma, Ogmios

Description: The creator of the Ogham alphabet that bears his name, Ogma is considered the wisest of the Tuatha. He is the patron of all druids and guides those who devote their life to learning, especially in the fields of law, languages, poetry, art and the sciences. But his talents are not limited to peaceful study: Ogma is equally famed across Ireland for his intelligence and his prowess as a warrior. During ancient times, Ogma served Nuada as his champion and was so strong that he was capable of hurling a massive stone that required eighty oxen to move it. Only Lugh has ever equaled him at this feat.

The son of the Dagda and Danu, Ogma is tall, with hair like pale fire and blue eyes fierce as a hawk's. Rather than the armor of warriors, he is traditionally seen wearing Druidic robes.

In modern times, Ogma can often be found at one university or another. He enjoys teaching history, literature, law and any number of languages, including Irish Gaelic. Though he has lost none of his skill as a warrior, he understands that entering a battle without a strategy is often futile. When he finally steps away from the books, however, he is a formidable foe to anyone he faces.

The Scions of Ogma are known for striking a balance between brains and brawn. They never rush blindly into a fight, but instead plan carefully and pay full attention to every advantage they can find. Those who eschew war for more intellectual paths are often among the finest minds of their generations, making new breakthroughs in archaeology, physics, chemistry, computers, linguistics and mathematics.

Associated Powers: Enech, Epic Dexterity, Epic Intelligence, Epic Strength, Guardian, War

Abilities: Academics, Art, Empathy, Melee, Presence, Thrown

Rivals: Ares, Kalfu, Loki, Susano-o, Thoth

GEASA

The heroes and Gods of Irish legend are bound by *geasa*, taboos against behavior or requirements that they act in a certain fashion. Such geasa are potent things, defining how those entities interact with the World in general. Geasa are defined by two elements: their Type and their Source. The Type tells what the benefits of upholding that geas are and what the penalties are for breaking it. Sources, on the other hand, indicate what form that geas takes — what is expected of one, how one maintains the geas, how one breaks it and how enech is restored when it is broken (see "Pantheon Purview: Enech," p. 22, for more information on enech). Each geas can only be taken once, although different kinds of the same geas (such as the Skill-Geas) can be taken once for each version of the geas in question.

GEASA TYPES

The Type of a geas indicates both the benefits for upholding that geas and the punishment for breaking it. These come in three categories: Token, Potent and Mortal. Note that some categories of geas cannot be taken with certain types.

These geasa often grant bonuses to a variety of different effects, referred to as a Geas Bonus. These bonuses are always based on the Legend of the one bound by the geas, as follows:

Legend	Geas Bonus
2 or less	1
3	2
4	4
5	7
6	11
7	16
8	22
9	29
10	37
11+	46

• **Ability:** The geas-bound character gains a Geas Bonus to all rolls using a single Ability for as long as he maintains enech in that geas: the swordsman's blade swings true, the orator is more moving than ever and the scholar's mind works wonders. Breaking the geas turns enech against the geas-bound's uses of that Ability, however, subtracting a number of successes equal to the bonus originally received. Rolls reduced below 0 successes are considered botches. *Token:* Rolls with Ability gain the Geas Bonus as extra dice to roll; *Potent:* Rolls with Ability add the Geas Bonus as automatic successes to rolls.

• **Body:** The geas-bound character heals at a much faster rate. Effectively, each health level the character would normally heal (whether through natural healing or supernatural means) actually heals several. When enech in this geas is broken, however, this ratio is reversed: the geas-breaker heals only one health level after the time or power used to heal several. *Potent:* 2 health levels per 1 health level of healing (1 per 2 when broken); *Mortal:* 5 health levels per 1 health level of healing (1 per 5 when broken).

• **Boon:** The geas-bound character gains a Geas Bonus to using a single Boon for as long as he maintains his enech in that geas. The power that he garners from such a restriction fuels the potency of his Boon directly, gaining a number of automatic successes to all activations of that Boon equal to his Geas Bonus. Breaking this geas is a dire thing, though, for the Scion loses access to that Boon entirely until enech is regained for the geas. *Potent.*

• **Legendary:** Those bound by the Legendary geas regain Legend at double the normal rate for as long as that geas is upheld. Additionally, each time he upholds his geas in such a fashion that his life is made more difficult, or there is some sacrifice involved for doing so, he also regains a point of Legend. Woe to the hero who breaks a Legendary geas, however, for until he regains enech, he loses a dot of Legend, reducing his Legend pool and denying him access to Boons that require a Legend of that level. *Potent.*

• **Purview:** The Purview geas serves as the Boon geas with one exception: it grants that Geas Bonus to all Boons of that Purview. Breaking this geas, however, denies the hero access to all Boons of that Purview until enech is regained. *Mortal.*

• **Relic:** A geas invested in a Relic grants potent benefits. All rolls associated with the Relic gain a number of bonus dice equal to the Geas Bonus. This includes attack rolls made with relic weapons, but it also includes rolls to activate Boons that the Relic can use. It does not include Boons that come from Purviews the Relics grants access to, though. Additionally, with an appropriate stunt, the hero who incorporates this Relic into an action cleverly can get the bonus for rolls that might not ordinarily get them — describing an enemy's reflection in the gleaming metal of a suit of Relic armor to augment a (Perception + Awareness) roll, for instance, or twirling a Relic necklace coyly when making a (Manipulation + Presence) roll. Breaking enech with this kind of geas causes the Relic to become unbound from the Scion; he is treated as though he were not the rightful wielder for the purpose of using it until he regains enech. *Potent.*

• **Resilience:** A hero with a Resilience geas is very difficult to kill indeed. By spending a point of Legend as she takes damage, she can cause a number of health levels of damage equal to her Legend dots to be downgraded by one damage step (from aggravated to lethal or lethal to bashing; bashing is unaffected). When this geas is broken, however, even minor wounds are dangerous: every time the hero takes damage, a number of health levels of that damage equal to her Legend dots are upgraded by one step. *Mortal.*

• **Service:** A hero with this kind of geas has a great deal invested in his duty as a master or leader of some kind, for one of his Followers or Creature Birthrights gain a bonus equal to his Legend to all rolls when obeying his commands or acting in service to him. Breaking this geas shatters the faith and loyalty of those who follow him, however: they cease to obey or follow him until he regains his enech. *Token.*

• **Willpower:** A hero with this geas derives great sense of self and confidence from his enech. Every time he upholds his geas in a situation where it is difficult or causes problems to do so, he regains points of Willpower. However, should he break enech, he actually loses a number of dots of Willpower equal to the points he normally gets, based on the power of the geas. *Token:* Regain 1 Willpower (lose 1 dot if broken); *Potent:* Regain 3 Willpower (lose 3 dots if broken).

GEASA SOURCES

The Tuatha require different things of the World's heroes — those who look to them as a source of inspiration or power must further the interests of the Tuatha. Thus, while there are a variety of general geasa, many of the Irish

RESTORING ENECH

Once a geas is broken, enech levies terrible punishment on the hero who dares go against its ways. The wise very quickly ascertain what must be done to atone for such foolishness. There are a number of ways that enech can be restored.

Source-Based Atonement: Many of the Geas Sources have a built-in method of atonement. Often, this involves deep immersion in the purpose of the geas, with the intention of learning the lessons that geas has to teach directly and quickly. These are often time consuming, though, and not always practical.

Second Geas: If the hero wronged another as part of his broken geas, he may beg that the one wronged bind him under a second geas in atonement. The time bound by this second geas depends on the Type of the one broken: a month for a Token geas broken, a year and a day for a Potent geas broken and a decade for a Mortal geas broken. The penalty for breaking this second one is more severe: the broken geas can never be restored, and the hero must suffer the associated penalty for the rest of his days.

Questing: Alternately, as appropriate to the heroic tradition, the geas-broken may undertake a quest of some sort. This quest is almost always very difficult and usually guaranteed to involve situations where the penalty for the broken geas comes into play. The difficulty with this route involves discovering precisely what the quest will restore enech — the hero cannot himself decide on this. This quest can be garnered in one of two ways:

- **Oracle:** The character must find a seer or oracle of some sort to tell him what the quest is. Such an individual must look into the flows of Fate to determine what will set enech aright. Other characters with either the Mystery or Prophecy Purviews may use their insight in such a fashion, requiring 5 successes for a Token Geas, 3 successes for a Potent Geas and only 1 success for a Mortal Geas — the more powerful the geas is, the easier it is to pick out what Fate decrees will set things aright.
- **Deity:** Alternately, the character may communicate with the deity or the agent of a deity associated with that kind of geas.

Gods also maintain their own geasa requirements. Any of these geasa can be taken as Token, Potent or Mortal Geasa.

Many of these Sources have built-in methods for recovering enech (see the "Restoring Enech" sidebar, above). These must be performed for a certain length of time, based on the Type of geas. Generally speaking, these duties must be performed for one month to restore a Token geas, one season to restore a Potent geas and a year and a day to restore a Mortal geas.

- **Beast:** Those bound to the beast-geas must render care for a specific kind of animal. Firstly, those bound by beast-geas must ensure that no animals of that kind come to harm within his presence — he must prevent anyone from harming those animals. Additionally, though, their care for these animals requires them to take in and care for any animals in need of such, having a minimum of one such animal per dot of Legend in their care at any given time. Allowing something to happen to an animal of that type or neglecting one's wards breaks the geas. The only way of regaining enech is through atonement, though the hero may seek out an intelligent version of the animal to give him such a quest, in addition to oracles and associated deities and their servants. **Associated Gods:** Aengus (birds), Brigid (swans), The Dagda (pigs), Danu, Lugh (dogs), Manannán (horses), The Morrigan (corvids)
- **Blood:** Those bound by the geas of blood cannot turn down the opportunity to bind the wounds and perform emergency first aid on those they encounter who are in need. The only time this is not the case is when the one he would help insists that he not do so, or when the one thus wounded is someone that the oath-bound one is battling (although he must provide such care even to his enemies if he bests them and they live). This geas is considered broken if the hero sees someone and does not stop to offer assistance with his next available action. The hero regains enech by dedicating his life solely to helping those who are in need of medical assistance. **Associated Gods:** Brigid, Dian Cécht
- **Child:** A Scion bound by the child-geas must never permit a child to be harmed in his presence. This geas is considered broken if the hero permits a child to be harmed or be neglected in his vicinity, even if he is powerless to stop it. The hero regains enech when he sees that the child is safe, happy and healthy again, and the one responsible has been punished. **Associated Gods:** Brigid, The Dagda, Danu, Manannán
- **Dinsenchas:** A hero bound by this geas must spend time in a specific place, caring for it and meditating on the power within it. At least four days out of every month must be dedicated to this endeavor, and failing to do so breaks enech. Regaining enech is simple: the

hero must devote time in this sacred place, tending for it and renewing his dedication. **Associated Gods:** Brigid (shrine), The Dagda (community or cultural areas), Danu (places in Ireland), Dian Cécht (forest), Lugh (hills and mountains), Manannán (coastal or ocean), The Morrigan (battlefields), Nuada (places of government), Ogma (places of learning)

• **Duty:** Those bound by the duty-geas must fulfill an ongoing task or duty. This is generally a very involved situation — not necessarily in terms of time (though there is that aspect as well) as much as in what the duty demands. Failing in one's duty breaks the geas. **Associated Gods:** Aengus, The Dagda (guard another), Lugh (guardianship or leadership), The Morrigan, Nuada (leadership)

• **Food:** Those bound by a food-geas are forbidden from eating a certain type of food. This is generally symbolic of the self or a Godly figure, or it represents a sacrifice of some kind. Eating this food breaks the geas. The only way of regaining enech is through atonement, though the hero may seek out an intelligent version of the animal or a spirit associated with the plant to give him such a quest, in addition to oracles and associated deities and their servants. **Associated Gods:** Aengus (birds), Brigid (swans), The Dagda (pork), Danu, Lugh (dogs), Manannán (horses), The Morrigan (corvids)

• **Forbiddance:** A forbiddance-geas prevents the geas-bound from touching a person or thing protected by a given substance or warding token. The forbiddance-geas may alternately protect a place, in which case the one bound by the geas may not enter into that place. The hero breaks the geas by ignoring this forbiddance, touching the person or thing affected (even by throwing something that touches the protected one) or entering into the place thus warded. Serving as protector for the person, place or thing violated restores enech for this geas. **Associated Gods:** Brigid (Brigit's cross), The Dagda (iron), Danu (iron), Lugh (iron), The Morrigan (iron, salt), Ogma (iron)

• **Guest:** Those bound by this geas must act as the perfect guests, always showing gratitude of their host's generosity by accepting it. Those bound by this break the geas by refusing offers of food, drink or shelter and by violating the possessions and home of their host. Those who break the guest-geas may regain enech by proving they do not take the generosity of others for granted: for the appropriate length of time, they may not eat or drink anything, or sleep in any bed that is not given to them by another. **Associated Gods:** The Dagda, Lugh, Ogma

• **Handfast:** Those bound by the handfast-geas agree that within the bounds of marriage is true love found, and so will not have sex outside of such an agreement between two people. This geas is broken if the one so bound has sex outside of a union of some kind or cheats on the person he is bound to. The hero may restore his enech by admitting his wrong-doing to his beloved and asking him or her for a task to fulfill to prove his repentance. If his beloved refuses and breaks things off with him, he may not regain his enech until he has found another to love and remained completely faithful with them for a year and a day (regardless of the Type). **Associated God:** Aengus

• **Hero:** The one bound by the hero's-geas must defend the weak. Refusing to do so breaks the geas, and enech is only satisfied once he has spent the appropriate length of time dedicated to some protracted defense of the weak. **Associated Gods:** Aengus, The Dagda, Lugh, The Morrigan, Nuada, Ogma

• **Hospitality:** Those bound by the geas of hospitality must offer others hospitality when they are in need or when asked. Refusing to offer hospitality to those in need, allowing a guest to go hungry or to rest in anything less than the best comfort he has to offer all break the geas. The host may regain enech by hosting a guest in posh comfort for the appropriate length of time. **Associated Gods:** The Dagda, Lugh, Manannán, Nuada

• **Imbas:** The "fire that sets the head alight" is the poetic euphemism for Brigid's flame, because it is the symbol for creative inspiration. The hero bound by imbas-geas must act as aid to artists, allowing them the luxury of producing. The geas is broken once the artist stops producing artwork for a month or produces nothing but terrible work for a month. Enech can only be regained when the geas-bearer does something to "shake things up," finding some way to reinspire the artist and get her producing for the appropriate length of time. **Associated Gods:** Brigid, Lugh, Ogma

• **Kings:** Those bound by this geas must never accept someone of less ability as a leader. Accepting the leadership of an unfit individual breaks the geas, and enech can only be regained by proving one's own superiority and wresting leadership of that situation back or lending support to those who are better fit for the appropriate length of time. **Associated Gods:** The Dagda, Lugh, Manannán, The Morrigan, Nuada

• **Lover:** Those bound by the lover's geas must never rein in their great desires. They must pursue those they find comely, working to seduce those they fancy with good cheer and unwavering enthusiasm. Those bound by lover's-geas break the geas by utterly failing to seduce the pretty things that catch their eye, though enech is satisfied if they find a new, more challenging would-be paramour and win them spectacularly. **Associated Gods:** Aengus, The Dagda, Manannán

• **Mate:** Those bound by the mate-geas are forbidden from having sexual relations with a certain type of individual. This geas is broken by sharing their bed, and enech is restored once the character has been abstinent from all sex entirely for the appropriate length of time. **Associated Gods:** Aengus, Danu, The Morrigan

• **Mother:** The Scion must never turn down the chance to assist a mother in need, including taking care of a pregnant woman. This geas is considered broken if the hero permits a mother or expectant mother to be harmed or go without in his vicinity, even if he is powerless to stop it. The hero regains enech when he sees that the mother is safe, happy and healthy again, and the one responsible (if any) has been punished. **Associated Gods:** Brigid, The Dagda, Danu, Dian Cécht

• **The Skill-Geas:** Those bound by this geas must master a lore or craft and then pass that knowledge on to others. A hero bound by this geas must choose a single Ability. He must then set aside 1 experience point every time experience points are awarded to put toward the purchase of a new dot in the Ability (this is 1 point at the end of a game session, and another point every time the Story Award is awarded as well). Then, once a character with this geas has an Ability rating of •••••, he must find someone to teach these skills to. He must have a class with this apprentice at least once a week. Failing to spend the experience points toward the purchase of the Ability or allowing a full week to pass without a class constitutes breaking this geas. The hero regains enech when he manages to teach an apprentice for the appropriate length of time. This geas name often changes depending on the Ability involved: it has been the Craftsman's Geas (Craft), the Healer's Geas (Medicine), the Ogham-Geas (Academics), the Druid's Geas (Science) and the Scathach's Geas (Melee). **Associated Gods:** Aengus (Animal Ken, Empathy, Presence), Brigid (Art: singing or music, Craft: blacksmithing, Empathy, Medicine, Melee), The Dagda (Animal Ken, Athletics, Command, Melee, Presence), Danu (Animal Ken, Awareness, Command), Dian Cécht (Craft: silversmithing, Empathy, Medicine, Survival), Lugh (Art: singing or music, Athletics, Occult, Presence, Thrown), Manannán (Animal Ken, Control: boats or horses, Occult), The Morrigan (Animal Ken, Marksmanship, Melee), Nuada (Athletics, Command, Fortitude, Melee, Thrown), Ogma (Academics, Art: calligraphy, Athletics, Brawl)

• **Sword:** Those bound by the sword-geas must challenge others to duels in order to measure their skills against others constantly; any time the geas-bound encounters someone who may or may not be her superior in battle, she must invite them to at least spar to discover this. Failing to challenge another or having someone interrupt the duel to assist the geas-bound breaks the geas, and enech can only be restored by seeking out one opponent per dot of Legend and beating them in a duel. **Associated Gods:** Brigid, Lugh, The Morrigan, Nuada

• **Trickster:** Those bound by this geas must always seek a way to humiliate the proud and the arrogant. This humiliation must be in scale to the pride and power of the victim in question (and of course, should never end in his death — the dead learn their lessons too late to benefit from them). This geas is broken when the geas-bound suffers a fool to be arrogant without retribution; generally speaking, he must at least begin putting plans into motion within a week after he meets the individual. Enech is restored when the hero pulls a truly inspired and degrading piece of humiliation on a genuinely deserving bastard. **Associated Gods:** The Dagda, Manannán

Purviews

New Boon: Ríastrad

While the tribal Irish were known as fierce warriors, their skill in battle was not due to canny group tactics, superior formations or battlefield control. Instead, each man in the war-party considered himself a hero on par with the heroes of legend and drove himself to heights of personal courage and excellence at arms. Thus, it is rare for Scions of the Tuatha to learn the War Boon "Battle Map" (though they are not prevented from doing so). Instead, Scions of the Tuatha are far likelier to learn this Boon.

Ríastrad (War ••••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 3 Legend + 1 Willpower + cost of other Boons and Knacks

The warp-spasm of Irish legend, the Scion with this Boon can channel a potent war-power, breathing in the very fury and twisting unpredictability of battle itself. When this Boon is activated, the body of the hero or God twists and warps, taking on a truly incomprehensible freakishness. Every nerve quivers with barely-contained violence, and the Scion's body temperature multiplies impossibly. The precise changes that overtake the one seized by the *ríastrad* vary from individual to individual. The legendary Cúchulainn literally twisted about in his skin, the bones of the front of his body jutting out from the back of his skin while one eye sank into its socket. His hair stood on end, creating red spikes topped with small sparks of flame that could set dry grass alight, and his jaws clenched so that it seemed like he might shatter his teeth with the strength of it.

Regardless of the cosmetic effects — which are always hideous and monstrous to behold — the *ríastrad* has the following mechanical effects:

• For each dot in Legend, the Scion chooses one other Boon or Knack that activates when the *ríastrad* begins. These powers must be paid for when this Boon is used — they simply all activate at the same time. Once

this roster of powers is purchased, it cannot be changed, as this is a manifestation of the Scion's divine rage and expresses itself differently for each Scion. As the Scion gains additional Legend, he may add additional Boons or Knacks to his *ríastrad*, which grows in accordance with his divine nature (at a rate of one Boon or Knack per dot of Legend gained).

• Any beauty-based Epic Appearance immediately drops to 0 and he loses the use of all associated Knacks for the duration of the warp-spasm. The Scion gains +1 dot of hideousness-based Epic Appearance, as well as the Dreadful Mein Knack (**Scion: Hero** p. 133).

• Any mortal within sight of the Scion is filled with terrible fear, inflicting a penalty equal to his Expression Virtue to all rolls made while remaining in the same battle as the Scion. Mortals who have not been trained for violent situations will flee the scene immediately, and those who have been trained for such situations must each spend a point of Willpower to remain in the area. A successful (Charisma + Command) roll by a leader or figure of authority at a difficulty equal to the Scion's (Legend + Epic Appearance) will prevent such a rout as well.

• The Scion gains three additional dots of Courage and is considered to be under the effects of the Berserker Fury Virtue Extremity (**Scion: Hero** p. 119). The Scion's Intellect Virtue also drops to 0, for he is nearly-mindless with rage and cannot heed the value of learning and wisdom.

• The Scion's DV decreases by 1 per dot in Courage (including the bonus from above).

• The Scion gains a number of successes equal to his (Legend + Expression) to any and all damage rolls made by Brawl, Melee and Thrown attacks, for his strikes are honed to a terrible, gory precision artful in their execution.

• The Scion gains a bonus to his bashing and lethal soaks equal to his (Legend + Piety Virtue), for the faith of the Scion is returned manifold in defense of the hero of the Gods.

The warp-spasm does not end when the Scion is out of enemies: all creatures are imperiled in the face of his divine rage, which lasts until the end of the scene or until he is coaxed out of it by his friends or his primal urges. Those attempting to lure him out of his rage — whether drawing on friendship or trying to tempt him with beautiful women or a wonderful meal — must make a (Charisma + Persuasion) roll, accumulating a number of successes in an extended roll equal to the Scion's (Legend + Courage) x5.

GEASA AND THE MYSTERIES PURVIEW

The kinds of twists in Fate that the laying of a geas creates are detectable by those who are skilled in the Mystery Purview. A character may make a Mystery roll to detect what geasa another character has in place. Reading a Token Geas requires three successes, a Potent Geas requires seven and thirteen successes will allow the reading of a Mortal Geas. If the wielder of the Mystery Purview does not garner sufficient successes to read all of an individual's geasa, he reads Token Geasa first, followed by Potent Geasa and Mortal Geasa. He has no indication if there are others present, and subsequent reading attempts must exceed the number of successes gained from earlier readings in order to sense them.

The person attempting this action gains a number of bonus dice equal to the Intellect Virtue of the Scion in the warp-spasm (disregarding the penalty to that Virtue that the *riastrad* inflicts, of course). For the duration of this attempt, however, that character is the warp-spasming Scion's primary target of aggression. Stunt dice should be awarded appropriately, such as the legendary feat of Cúchulainn's allies, who lured him on with beautiful women into water in hopes of literally cooling him down.

PANTHEON PURVIEW: ENECH

Though most modern scholars simply translate this term to mean "face" or "honor," it means so much more — particularly in the eyes of the Tuatha. *Enech* is one's worth, and all creatures, from the most divine to the lowliest of mortals, are beholden to attempt to improve their worth in the eyes of Gods and men. Mere men must constantly work to maintain their enech by proving themselves worthy men of honor and skill.

This Purview taps into that force of honor and worth, which is in turn tied into Fate to some degree. Heroes and Gods find that enech demands much more of them than of mortals, though its rewards are great as well. Such great folk may be bound by geasa, (see "Geasa," pp. 16-20). Godly heritage allows a Scion to tap into this power, to bring low his foes and raise up his friends, but he must forever watch his own behaviors and mind his geasa.

Brehon's Eye (Enech •)

Dice Pool: Perception + Empathy

Cost: 1 Legend

To understand the demands of enech upon the Scion, she must first understand its demands on those around her. With this power, the Scion assumes a canny and wise attitude, watching carefully and allowing those insights to influence her judgment. The information that comes with this power was of old called *enechsenchas*, or "enech lore," and is often used in later Boons in this Purview.

Once this power is activated, the Scion rolls (Perception + Empathy), adding in any successes from Epic Perception. For each success, he can judge the enech of one individual present, beginning with those with the highest Legend. Reading someone's enech grants the Scion knowledge of what his highest Virtue is, what his lowest Virtue is and what his Nature is.

This can only be activated once per scene.

Hero's Geas (Enech ••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: None

Heroes and Gods are held to a greater standard. Because the simple lives of mortal men are no challenge to the enech of the entities of Legend, it is only appropriate that they accept greater restrictions and requirements to demonstrate their mindfulness, honor and perseverance. Thus, the greatest of Gods and heroes are laid with geasa, prohibitions against specific actions or requirements that a specific action must always be undertaken when the Scion or God is presented with the opportunity.

It is important to keep one's geasa secret, for those who know them can use them as a weapon against the hero. The mighty Cúchulainn died by such cunning. When the crafty Queen Medb learned of his geasa against refusing hospitality and against eating the meat of a dog, she invited him to a meal of roasted hound, sealing his fate. He died by a spear-blow in his very next battle.

When a Scion purchases this power, he must immediately choose a single geas, either one that is general in nature or one appropriate to his divine parent. This is a Legendary Geas (see p. 17 for details on this Geas). For advice in choosing a geas, and the penalties for breaking them, see "Geasa," pp. 16-20.

Additionally, any time the Scion purchases a Boon from a Purview other than his parent's, he may choose to assume a geas appropriate to a God of the Tuatha associated with that Purview. Doing so allows him to purchase the geas as though it were from his divine parent. Breaking such a geas is a terrible choice, though, for not only does it have the normal penalties for breaking a geas, but it also denies the Scion the use of that Boon until his enech is restored.

Lay Token Geas (Enech •••)

Dice Pool: Charisma + Presence

Cost: 1 Legend + 1 Willpower (or 1 Legend + 1 Willpower *dot*)

With this power, the Scion taps into the potent flows of enech and may levy the expectations of greatness on those around him. This roll is opposed by the target's (Wits + Integrity + Legend), and the roll itself has a difficulty of the target's Legend +1. If this roll is successful, the target is bound by a geas of Token potency for two months per

net success in the roll, to a maximum of a year and a day. Alternately, if the Scion expends a full dot (rather than a point) of Willpower, the geas is laid permanently.

The Scion may not levy simply any sort of geas, however. The actual choice of the geas is not up to the Scion, but up to enech itself — the Scion merely draws the attention of enech and acts as the conduit for the geas. The Storyteller chooses a geas that is poetically appropriate for the victim, keeping in mind the most extreme parts of the character's personality (as often exemplified in his highest or lowest Virtues). Thus, a target who has cut a swathe through the innocents around him and discovers that he has a high Vengeance Virtue rating might be levied with the child-geas, where no child can ever come to harm within the Scion's ability to prevent it.

It should be noted that a geas is explicitly not a curse — each geas comes with benefits for those who keep the geas. Rather, the Tuatha consider geasa to be the means by which one helps shape the actions of heroes and legends. They are combination carrots *and* sticks meant to motivate a particular sort of behavior.

Body and Spirit (Enech ◆◆◆◆)

Dice Pool: Charisma + Empathy (Spd 3, DV –1)

Cost: 1 Legend, or 1 Legend + 1 Willpower if used on another

Modesty is never a Virtue to the Scion of the Tuatha. It is an insult to enech — pretending to be something less then you are is as bad as pretending to be something better. Thus, the Scion who uses this Boon chooses to declaim his best attributes and admit to his weakest. The Scion must choose which Virtues he is going to declaim about himself at the time of the Boon's activation. The difficulty of the roll is equal to the rating of the highest Virtue he is invoking, +1 per additional Virtue.

For the remainder of the scene, the Scion gains the following bonuses, assuming the declamation of that Virtue:

- **Courage:** A bonus equal to his Courage Virtue to all rolls using Strength, Dexterity or Stamina.
- **Expression:** A bonus equal to his Expression Virtue to all rolls using Charisma, Manipulation or Appearance.
- **Intellect:** A bonus equal to his Intellect Virtue to all rolls using Perception, Intelligence or Wits.
- **Piety:** A number of points of Legend equal to his Piety Virtue.

A Scion with this Boon may purchase it a second time; doing so allows him to declaim the Virtues of others once he has used Brehon's Eye on them. Of course, to the powers of enech, the Virtues associated with other pantheons are not nearly as enlightened as the four Virtues of the Tuatha. A character whose non-Tuatha Virtue is lauded by the Scion regains a number of points of either Legend or Willpower equal to the rating of that Virtue, depending on the Virtue in question. A character can only benefit from one Virtue-based source of Willpower and one Virtue-based source of Legend from a single declamation:

- **Legend:** Duty, Harmony, Loyalty, Order
- **Willpower:** Conviction, Endurance, Valor, Vengeance

Finally, with the ability to declaim the Virtues of others, the Scion may also cast scorn and derision on those who adhere to the Titanic Virtues who he has used Brehon's Eye on, as follows:

- **Ambition:** Target loses a number of points of Legend equal to his Ambition Virtue.
- **Malice:** Target loses a number of dice equal to his Malice Virtue on all Social rolls.
- **Rapacity:** Target loses a number of dice equal to his Rapacity Virtue on all Mental rolls.
- **Zealotry:** Target loses a number of points of Willpower equal to his Zealotry Virtue.

Bard's Tongue (Enech ◆◆◆◆◆)

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Presence

Cost: 2 Legend

The words of the bard are always heeded because he has taken care to see deeply into someone's nature and knows the truth of them. The Scion with this Boon claims part of a bard's enech, and his words about that person are rendered truthful. To be spoken of well by a bard is to excel in life; to be mocked by one is to know scorn, shame and failure.

The Scion using this Boon must first use Brehon's Eye on a target. She then describes either a terrible insult or a glowing compliment for the target. If this utterance refers to one of the target's Virtues in a positive manner (for a complimentary use) or in a negative tone (for a mocking one), this roll gains a number of automatic successes equal to the target's Virtue. The total successes form a pool, which may be used to purchase individual effects, as follow.

If the proclamation is a positive one, the target may spend his points in any of the following ways:

- To regain a point of Legend (1 point).
- To regain a point of Willpower (2 points).
- To gain a bonus to a roll appropriate to the compliment. "My comrade is a peerless warrior, and a lusty lover to boot!" would be appropriate for rolls involving both combat and seduction, for instance (1 point per +1, to a maximum bonus equal to the Scion's Presence).

If the speech has a negative tone, the Scion may spend the resultant successes in any of the following ways:

- To subtract a point of Legend (1 point).
- To subtract a point of Willpower (2 points).
- To inflict a penalty to a roll appropriate to the mockery. "This fool couldn't sneak his way out of a dark room filled with blind men, nor see the darkness in front of his face while doing so!" would be appropriate for rolls involving Stealth and Perception, for instance (1 point per –1, to a maximum penalty equal to the Scion's Presence).

Lay Potent Geas (Enech ●●●●● ●)

Dice Pool: Charisma + Presence

Cost: 5 Legend + 1 Willpower (or 5 Legend + 1 Willpower *dot*)

This Boon functions as "Lay Token Geas," save that it lays a Potent Geas on the target.

Assumption of the Land (Enech ●●●●● ●●)

Dice Pool: Stamina + Empathy (two Speed 5, DV –2 exclusive actions)

Cost: 5 Legend + 1 Willpower

The Song of Amerghin relates the process called "assumption" best—when the Milesian bard Amerghin first set foot on the shores of Ireland, he sang this song, taking into himself the powers of Eire and making himself one with the land. The Scion with this Boon may do likewise, opening himself up to the unique flows of enech associated with that site and making himself part of it.

The activation of this Boon takes two actions, and these are the only actions the Scion may take. With the first action, the Scion rolls (Stamina + Empathy), immersing himself in the enech of the site and gaining the *dinsenchas* ("place lore") of the land he stands in. With his second action, he spends the Legend and Willpower to activate the Boon and spends the successes gained in the first action. The effects gained through the use of this power are as follows:

- The Scion may feel the health of the land, knowing intimately its blights and taints. These could be environmental, spiritual or even Titanic taints, revealing the location of any creature that has Titanic Virtues. *Automatic.*

• Each site has a single Purview associated with it. The factory may be associated with the Fire Purview, the healing glade with the Health Purview and the battlefield with the War Purview. A Scion may use successes to purchase Boons from those Purviews while located in that area. Possession of these Boons lasts for a single scene or until the Scion leaves the area, whichever comes first. *2 successes per dot of the Boon.*

• The site works to defend the Scion. The area is filled with improbable coincidences intended to keep the Scion safe, granting him a DV bonus for as long as he is in the area. This applies even against attacks the Scion is not aware of. *1 success per +1 DV, to a maximum of the Scion's Legend.*

Once a Scion has gained the dinsenschas of a place, he may not ordinarily do so again — his "first impression" forms the basis for his interaction with that site from then on. When in that area in the future, the Scion need only take the second action (spending the Legend and Willpower cost for this Boon) to re-attune himself to the site.

The land puts a burden of enech upon the Scion, however — the friendship of the land is never one-sided. First of all, the Scion is constantly aware of any dangers to the land, as though he had used the Guardian Boon Vigil Brand (**Scion: Hero,** pp. 143-144) on the land itself. Secondly, the Scion receives a Legendary Dinsenchas Geas for the site he has bound himself to.

This can only be used in the World or in Terrae Incognita, or in the Underworld and Overworld Realms associated with the Tuatha.

Lay Mortal Geas (Enech ◆◆◆◆◆ ◆◆◆)

Dice Pool: Charisma + Presence

Cost: 12 Legend + 1 Willpower (or 12 Legend + 1 Willpower *dot*)

This Boon functions as Lay Token Geas, save that it lays a Mortal Geas on the target.

Twist Geas (Enech ◆◆◆◆◆ ◆◆◆◆)

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Presence

Cost: 5–12 Legend + 1 Willpower

So deft is the Scion's interaction with enech that he can twist its flows and eddies around an individual, changing it irrevocably. As long as the Scion knows the full details of one of the target's geasa, he can use this Boon to change the details of that geas. He may change the geas within its Type (changing one Mortal Geas to another) or within its Source. This costs 5 Legend for Token Geasa, 8 Legend for Potent Geasa and 12 Legend for Mortal Geasa.

The target is not given any indication of the nature of the change. Indeed, those who have been victimized by such a change may not even know it has occurred until they find themselves on the wrong end of a broken geas they didn't even know they had. The Mysteries Purview can be used to ascertain the details of this new geas, however.

Beyond the Ninth Wave (Enech ◆◆◆◆◆ ◆◆◆◆◆)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 20 Legend + 1 Willpower

When the Milesians first came to Ireland, the three queens of Eire asked them to withdraw back beyond the ninth wave of Ireland until they could determine the appropriate course of action. Because the ninth wave symbolized the borders of the land, the rulers of the Tuatha could then call upon the powers of the land and its enech to assault the intruders, rather than risking hospitality laws by having the land rise up against those who stood upon it.

With this power, the Scion withdraws himself or another past the metaphorical ninth wave of a Godly power, withdrawing from the enech of that part of the world. In game terms, the Scion chooses a single Purview and removes himself entirely from that concept as it interacts within the world. While he is withdrawn from that Purview, he cannot be affected by the powers of that Purview, nor by effects that are based in it. Withdrawing beyond the ninth wave lasts for one hour per dot of Legend, or until the Scion wills it to end. This Boon may be activated multiple times, at a cost of 20 Legend and 1 Willpower point per activation.

Additionally, the Scion himself cannot use any Boons of the Purview, nor can he benefit from them in any fashion. Only Gods in the Avatar form of that Purview may affect him by using such powers. Those wielding this power may not choose to withdraw beyond the ninth wave of any Special Purview or any Pantheon Purview save the Enech Purview.

These have the following effects, based on the Purview in question:

• **Animal:** Withdrawing beyond the ninth wave of the animal world means that the Scion functionally doesn't exist for any animals at all — they do not see him, nor can they touch him in any way. Likewise, while he can see them, he cannot touch them either. This includes intelligent versions of animals and nemean animals, though it does not include creatures whose forms simply happen to be based on animals.

• **Chaos:** Withdrawing beyond the ninth wave of chaos means that the Scion is unaffected by chaos unfolding in the world. Mobs, crowds, storms, earthquakes and similar situations of chaos manifested in the world have no effect on him — he walks among such situations and the madness parts before him, leaving him untouched.

• **Darkness:** Withdrawing beyond the ninth wave of darkness prevents the Scion from being affected by the darkness whatsoever. It poses no limitations on his vision and does not hide him in the least — he always stands out, perfectly back-dropped by the darkness but very clear within it, as though the viewer were seeing him in full sunlight.

• **Death:** Withdrawing beyond the ninth waves of death prevents the Scion from dying, whether from taking too much damage or having death-inflicting powers used on him. This merely postpones the inevitable, however, for when this effect ends, if the Scion is still under the condition that would cause him to die, he immediately drops dead. Having all health levels filled in as normal counts as such a condition; if a creature that targeted the Scion with an automatic death effect is still alive when this effect wears off, the Scion is considered to still be under such a condition. Creatures of death such as ghosts, vampires, zombies and similar horrors cannot see the Scion.

• **Earth:** Withdrawing beyond the ninth wave of earth allows the Scion to step through stone, soil, sand and metals as though they did not exist. Attacks based on such effects — including hurled boulders and weapons forged of normal metals — simply fail. The Scion doesn't fall through the earth or anything similar if he doesn't wish to. He may choose when the earth acts as a barrier and when it does not.

• **Enech:** Withdrawing beyond the ninth wave of enech grants the Scion immunity to the flows of enech. He cannot violate any of his geasa, and no action he takes will ever violate the geasa of others.

• **Fertility:** Withdrawing beyond fertility's ninth wave allows the Scion to ignore the green and growing things of the world. He does not exist as far as plants are concerned, and may pass right through them as though they didn't exist. Plant-based creatures cannot perceive the character.

• **Fire:** Withdrawing beyond fire's ninth wave makes the Scion or God immune to fire completely and utterly, as though the flames did not exist. He is also immune to the effects of fire in the environment — he breathes smoky air without notice, and surface and air temperatures that might scald his skin or lungs don't cause any discomfort. Creatures made of fire or associated with fire cannot perceive the character.

• **Guardian:** Withdrawing beyond guardian's ninth wave renders the Scion immune to perception by defenders, watchers, sentries, security systems and those things which exist to watch and warn. Additionally, his interactions with others protected by various Guardian Purview Boons do not set those Boons off — he and his actions do not exist for the purpose of this Purview.

• **Health:** Withdrawing beyond health's ninth wave renders the Scion immune to any and all normal biological interactions with the world. Though Gods generally engage in such matters only voluntarily anyway, this effect makes it so that human beings cannot see or interact with the Scion or God in any fashion, though he is still physically, solidly present. The direct effects of the Scion's presence can still be felt, though, and any environmental effects caused by people can still affect the Scion.

• **Justice:** Withdrawing beyond the ninth wave of justice renders the Scion immune to the influences of retribution and justice. Those seeking revenge against him simply cannot see him, and any actions augmented by the Vengeance Virtue automatically fail against him. Additionally, agents of justice and revenge (from the toughest police officer to the mighty Furies) cannot perceive him.

• **Moon:** Withdrawing beyond the moon's ninth wave permits the Scion to strip influences of concealment and lunacy from his existence. He automatically spots any and all hidden things. In fact, they stand out in his vision more than its surroundings. He is also immune to madness, and those who are insane cannot sense or affect him.

• **Psychopomp:** Withdrawing beyond the ninth wave of the psychopomp eliminates the need for the Scion to actually engage in travel. As a miscellaneous action (with no need to roll), he may simply will himself to be anywhere in the World for the duration of his withdrawal. He must know of the location, however — at the very least, he must be able to point it out on a map.

• **Sky:** Withdrawing beyond the sky's ninth wave grants the Scion immunity to all weather effects and winds. Rain does not soak him, winds do not blow his clothing and he becomes immune to all attacks involving cold and electricity. Air pressure does not discomfit him in any way.

• **Sun:** Withdrawing beyond the sun's ninth wave casts the Scion into eternal shadow, hiding him from the sight of Gods and men alike. By the light of sun or moon, he becomes completely unseen, for those sources of light pass right through him as though he were not there. Only in rooms completely devoid of any trace of outside light will he be revealed. Attacks based in light (including lasers and the like) cannot touch him.

• **War:** Withdrawing beyond the ninth wave of war places the Scion beyond the reach of any and all violence. Moreover, this renders the Scion incapable of inflicting violence himself for as long as he is withdrawn. Scions thus protected also become completely unseen in the middle of battles and conflicts regardless of the size. Because most athletic competitions were intended to keep fighting skills trim in times of peace, this includes sports as well.

• **Water:** Withdrawing beyond the ninth wave of water causes the Scion to not exist as far as water is concerned, and vice versa. The Scion may choose to walk upon the surface of water as though it were solid ground or to walk through water as though it weren't there. All liquids that are not better associated with another Purview (such as magma being associated with Fire) are included in this.

BIRTHRIGHTS

CREATURES

The Steeds of Cúchulainn (Creature ♦♦♦, Relic ♦♦)

Liath Macha and Dub Sainglend ("the Gray of Macha" and "the Black of Saingliu") are the chariot horses of the great hero Cúchulainn. These horses are swifter and stronger than normal horses and nearly as smart as an average mortal. Before the battle in which Cúchulainn was slain, the Gray refused three times to be bridled and wept tears of blood when the halter was placed on its head, knowing its master would die that day. In that battle, the Gray killed thirty foes with his hooves and another fifty with his teeth. After the death of their master, Lugh removed them from the field of battle before they could be slain.

The steeds of Cúchulainn are so swift that they can run across water without falling in. They are also perfectly trained and will obey any order given to them by their master, no matter the language spoken. The Steeds of Cúchulainn use the horse template (p. 331 of **Scion: Hero**).

In addition to its normal characteristics, Liath Macha also has Epic Strength 2 (Holy Bound, Holy Rampage), Epic Dexterity 1 (Lightning Sprinter), two additional –0, -1 and –2 health levels each, and the following Virtues: Courage 4, Expression 1, Intellect 3, Piety 3. The Gray possesses Legend 2 and is able to use the first two dots of the Water Purview.

Dub Sainglend possesses Epic Strength 1 (Holy Bound), Epic Stamina 1 (Holy Fortitude), one additional –0, -1 and –2 health level each, and the Virtues Courage 3, Expression 1, Intellect 2 and Piety 2. The Black has Legend 1 and is able to use the first two dots of the Water Purview as well.

The Flocks of the Morrigan (Creature ♦♦, Relic ♦)

The battle-goddess Morrigan is known to have control over ravens, crows, rooks and blackbirds, and she uses these creatures as messengers, spies and occasionally attackers. From time to time, she will gift a favorite Scion with a small flock of these birds to be used for the same purposes. The birds are extremely intelligent for animals, and the Scion who controls them can communicate with and command them. Birds sitting on a telephone wire are seldom thought of as unusual, and thus they can eavesdrop on conversations and carry information back to their masters.

Those Scions who receive the gift of one of her flocks from the Morrigan sometimes gain it as a Relic in the form of a small silver pin or pendant in the shape of a raven. When the item of jewelry is taken off and thrown into the air, it transforms into the flock. Scions so gifted may use it to channel the Animal (Corvid) Purview.

The Flocks of the Morrigan are composed of corvids that use the small bird template on p. 329 of **Scion: Hero**, except their Intelligence rises from 1 to 3 (the better to understand the Scion's commands). They also possess Epic Intelligence 1 (Perfect Memory), Epic Perception 2 (Predatory Focus, Subliminal Warning), Legend 3 and the following Virtues: Courage 2, Expression 2, Intellelect 3 and Piety 2. A flock is generally composed of 10-30 birds.

The Hound of Lugh (Creature ♦♦♦♦)

Lugh's hound is a gigantic war dog. It looks like a massively-muscled mastiff, standing five feet tall at the shoulder, with ferocious fangs and a superlative sense of smell. It can track a target through any sort of environment (swamp, forest, desert) and shrugs off wounds in battle as if they were mosquito bites. Not for nothing is this black dog considered to be an omen of doom, for foes spotting it on the field of battle seldom leave the fight alive.

The hound of Lugh uses the dog template on page 331 of **Scion: Hero**. In addition to the normal characteristics, it has one additional –0 and two additional –1 and –2 health levels. It also possesses a Legend Rating of 2, 5 Legend points, Epic Strength 1 (Crushing Grip, performed with jaws), Epic Perception 1 (Predatory Focus), Epic Stamina 1 (Damage Conversion) and Epic Appearance 1 (Dreadful Mien). The hound of Lugh possesses the following Virtues: Courage 5, Expression 1, Intellect 2 and Piety 1.

FOLLOWERS

The Fianna and The Red Branch Knights (Followers ♦♦♦ to ♦♦♦♦♦)

The Fianna and the Red Branch Knights are warriors that made up the two greatest warbands in Irish history. The Red Branch existed during the reign of Conochobar mac Nessa (king of Ulster) around A.D. 10, and the Fianna followed Irish hero Fionn mac Cumhaill during the reign of Irish High King Cormac mac Art at the beginning of the third century.

People were admitted to both warrior bands based solely on their prowess in battle. They were expected to be of impeccable honor, skilled with the use of spear, sword and shield, and capable of fighting equally well on foot,

on horseback or in the back of a chariot. In earlier times, the majority of both bands were made up of the sons (and occasionally daughters) of nobility, but from time to time low-born warriors who had proven their worth were also admitted (such as Laeg, the charioteer of Cúchulainn). In modern times, followers from either band are as likely to contain warriors born into poverty or middle- class families as they are to contain people from the upper crust.

Members of either band have the Virtues of the Tuatha, with most having Courage as their primary Virtue. Many may be Scions themselves, although often of lesser members of the pantheon. They fight without fear of death or injury, afraid only of losing honor in the eyes of their Gods.

Each dot of Followers after the first nets five Fianna or Knights. The characteristics for members of either the Red Branch Knights or the Fianna are identical to those for the template for the experienced soldier or mercenary on p. 283 of **Scion: Hero**, except that any attempts to use the Enech Purview against either group of characters gain 3 bonus dice.

GUIDES

The Aes Sídhe (Guide ◆◆◆ to ◆◆◆◆)

The Daoine Maite, or the "Good People." The Gentry. The Kindly Ones. The Daoine Sídhe. The Good Neighbors. All of these are the names given to the aes sídhe, or the "people of the Sídhe." Whether shining and beautiful or terrifying and monstrous, these are the people beneath the hills, half-divine and half something else. The aes sídhe worshipped the Tuatha before the coming of the Milesians, and when the Milesians won the right to Ireland through iron and blood, the aes sídhe agreed that these fair mortals should have all of the Green Isle above the ground, while that which was below it belonged to them.

Capricious and strange, the aes sídhe withdrew from the World by way of the *sídhe*, the hollow hills that dot the landscape of Eire. Some fled to the bosom of the Tuatha, withdrawing into Tír na nÓg, the Land of Youth where they became more radiant and beautiful. These fairies earned a variety of names for themselves, the foremost among them given by the Scots: "Seelie" or "blessed." Others, bitter that the Tuatha had given their home away to mortals, fled into the lands where the dead journeyed. These night-haunts and winter spirits came to be called by many names, among them "Unseelie" or "unholy."

The Seelie are those aes sídhe that dwell in the great court Tír na nÓg. This place is known by many names: the Seelie Court, the Court of Fire, the Beltane Gather and the Clan of Brigid. Though later folklore often talks of kings or queens of the faerie, no one truly rules among the aes sídhe — they simply know their place in the order of things. The closest thing they know to leadership is among the Tuatha Dé Danaan, who are revered and cherished when they make their rare appearances among the aes sídhe. In truth, the aes sídhe of these lands are free to embrace their own caprice and whimsy, though they tend to comport themselves with honor, bravery and respect.

In contrast, the Unseelie dwell in the cold places of Tir na Marbh. They, too, are known by many names, including the Unseelie Court, the Court of Ice, the Samhain Gather and the Clan of the Morrigan. Though the Unseelie do not despise the Tuatha, neither do they give them anything more than the fear that powerful Gods should be rendered. While the Unseelie are cruel, mocking and hold a dear grudge against mortals for taking their home, they aren't creatures of the Titans. The majority of the aes sídhe might be called hideous, though there are a number who possess a cold, dark beauty that chills the mortal heart.

Traits: The aes sídhe use alfar stats (see **Scion: Hero**, pp. 296-297), up to and including the weakness to cold iron — the material used by the Milesians to drive them from the green hills of Ireland. Aes sídhe are functionally immortal, outside of violence (or sometimes the death that comes of a broken heart). Additional notes apply, based on whether the aes sídhe in question is Seelie or Unseelie.

- *Seelie:* Seelie aes sídhe hold the Virtues of Expression and Piety in highest esteem and nearly always have at least one dot in Epic Appearance, with a focus on beauty. Many display Boons from the Purviews of Fire and Sky, as well as Sun and Health.

- *Unseelie:* In contrast, the Unseelie value the Virtues of Courage and Intellect, and they always have at least a single dot of Epic Appearance as well, though their manifestations create fear and horror in mortals (whether through a terrifying, grotesque appearance or because of a heart-stopping beauty). Many display Boons from the Purviews of Earth and Water, as well as Darkness and Death.

Elf-Shot: The bronze weapons of the aes sídhe are specially made so to cause paralysis in those unfortunate enough to be struck. These weapons are infused with the legendary glamour of the aes sídhe, distilling the awe or horror their appearances inspire into the golden sheen on their weaponry. Referred to as elf-shot, this power is not part of the missiles themselves, but rather the weapons that launch them. By spending a point of Legend when making an attack roll, the wielder of such a Relic may change the ammunition of his weapon (be it bow or firearm) into a bronze material that glows slightly golden in darkness. Those struck by such a weapon must make a (Stamina + Fortitude + Legend) roll, opposed by the attacker's (Appearance + Presence + Legend). The duration is one scene against creatures without a Legend rating, or ten ticks per Health Level inflicted by the elf-shot for those with a Legend rating (during which the one paralyzed can only take Inactive actions). This is a two-dot power for Relics given to Scions of the Tuatha Dé Danaan and may only be applied to weapons that use the Marksmanship Ability.

Weakness: In addition to the mortal weakness to iron suffered by all elf-folk (as detailed under the description of the alfar, **Scion: Hero**, p. 296), all of the aes sídhe suffer from a Body Forbiddance (Iron) Geas.

Leanan Sídhe (Guide •••)

The feared leanan sídhe, the fairy-lover, is a terrifying muse and mistress. Always of the Unseelie and usually female, these vampiric Good Folk feed on the life of a mortal, siphoning away their health and sanity. In its place, however, the victim of the leanan sídhe gains unprecedented creativity, as the fires of imbas burn brighter within them like a once-covered flame exposed to open air. Leanan sídhe usually choose only a single lover at one time, spending all their time with them. The mortal becomes obsessed with both his new lover and his artwork; indeed, to him, they are inseparable. The victim's artwork becomes transcendent in its beauty, though it is always of a haunting, somewhat melancholy quality, filled with cynicism, misery and shadows.

Traits: The leanan sídhe are aes sídhe with plenty of Epic Manipulation and Epic Appearance.

Supernatural power: *Vampiric Muse:* While a mortal is composing, roll the leanan sídhe's (Legend + Expression). Each success inflicts one health level of bashing damage on the mortal, which heals at a normal rate; however, because the mortal's dreams are haunted by the visage of the leanan sídhe, he can gain no actual rest until the leanan sídhe leaves him alone for twenty-four hours. Each success on this roll also gives the leanan sídhe one point of Legend. Should the mortal ever have seven health levels of these wounds at once, he slips into a troubled dream-like coma for twenty-four hours, during which time the leanan sídhe feeds on a dot of his Willpower (see below). Once the mortal is out of Willpower, he either commits suicide in a spectacular fashion or simply drifts off into a coma, dying on the anniversary of the day he met the leanan sídhe.

Weakness: Leanan sídhe must feed on one dot of Willpower per month while in the World, or lose one Willpower dot of her own. All leanan sídhe are also bound by an Ability (Presence) Imbas geas.

Bean Sídhe (Guide ••••)

Though their name means "fairy woman," not all women of the aes sídhe are considered bean sídhe. Only fairy women who are fascinated with mortal death populate the ranks of the bean sídhe — the aes sídhe are immortal, and so funerary customs, the grief of death and the inevitability of mortality all fascinate them. Each bean sídhe adopts a mortal family and watches them carefully. They take only vague note of the births and successes of those families, however, for it's their deaths that fascinate them.

Bean sídhe cannot help but appear to those families who are about to suffer a death of one of their number — their keening (learned from the Morrigan, who invented the funerary keen) can be heard on storm winds, warning members of the family. The bean sídhe may also appear to the one who is about to die, sometimes as a wailing, ghostly woman clad in funereal weeds or as a washerwoman at a ford, cleaning the blood out of the person's own clothing.

Traits: Bean sídhe have the same traits as normal aes sídhe, though many of them have mastered Boons from the Death and Psychpomp Purviews. All bean sídhe also know the Prophecy Purview, which allows them to foretell the deaths of the mortals of the families they watch over.

Weaknesses: In addition to the typical limitations of the aes sídhe, all bean sídhe are also bound by a Purview (Death) Duty geas, requiring them to watch over and announce the deaths of their chosen family.

The Fir Bolg (Guide •••)

When the Tuatha Dé Danaan first came to the Green Isle from their place of birth, they found the land already inhabited by two tribes of folk. The first were the fomorians, great of size and hunger. The others, however, were the Fir Bolg, the "people of the bags." They were so-called for the small bags made of crane skin they wore around their necks, decorated with the colors and stones of their clans and filled with the tokens sacred to the land where they lived (and their Titanic father, Crom Dubh). Where the fomorians were massive in build, the Fir Bolg were short, with stooped postures from dwelling in the places beneath the earth, where they were driven by the bullying fomorians.

As part of their war against the fomorians, the Tuatha sent mighty Lugh to speak with them, and he dazzled them with his skills and radiant brow. They agreed to help the Tuatha against the fomorians and abandoned the worship of the Titans, siding instead with the Tribe of Danu. In time, the victory of the Tuatha over the fomorians was also the victory of the Fir Bolg, and the two races dwelt in peace for a long time, though the Fir Bolg preferred to remain beneath the earth.

Some of the Fir Bolg came to emulate Lugh, becoming craftsmen with the gold they unearthed and emulating his shining visage and skilled hands. The aes sídhe laughed to see such devotion, and some among the Fir Bolg were called *luchchromain*, or "little stooping Lugh," for their craftsmanship and love of gold. Eventually, these Fir Bolg (and their Gaelic name) inspired the tales of the leprechaun.

Others among the Fir Bolg regretted their assistance to the Tuatha, remembering other days spent beneath the earth before the coming of Danu's people. These Fir Bolg often fell into drunken stupors, invading the wine cellars of the aes sídhe. Eventually, these clurichaun were banished to the northern climes of Scotland's highlands, where they were known as guardians of wine cellars and little drunkard spirits.

Traits: Fir Bolg are shorter than humans and the aes sídhe, generally standing between three and four feet tall. They often appear somewhat hump-backed, particularly as they get along in years, and prefer to dwell underground. Leprechauns take a great deal of pride in their Craft skills, from cooking to cobbling to jewelry-crafting. They love working in gold and do so often, having accumulated piles of raw gold over the centuries of hollowing out Irish hillsides.

Supernatural Powers: *Earthen Affinity:* As part of their connection with Crom Cruach, through their father Crom Dubh, Fir Bolg have incredible ability to shape and craft earthenworks. They prefer to work underground and are subtle in their artwork. Any subterranean construction

they create completely fails to show up to mortal senses, up to and including cutting-edge seismological technology and other means that would normally reveal caverns and the like. Such approaches simply fail to detect them. Likewise, the entrances into these places are cunningly concealed, such that a mortal may actually watch an entity use one of the passages and still not see the entrance at all, appearing as though they'd simply disappeared.

Weaknesses: Fir Bolg all share a unique weakness: the wish-geas. Each one is bound by some required Duty Geas, often based around protecting something. Leprechauns defend their pots of gold, while clurichauns guard wine cellars. Failing in this task means that the individual Fir Bolg is required to grant a wish to the one who manages to either trick the location of their gold from them or spirit away a bottle of wine without their knowledge. The Fir Bolg themselves do not have the power to truly grant wishes, it should be noted: they must go to the aes sídhe for help in granting these wishes, as both penance and admission of guilt. If the aes sídhe do not have the power to grant the wish, they take the concerns before the rulers of the Courts, and failing that before the Tuatha themselves.

Púca (Guide •••)

Small lying tricksters, the púca (or the pwca, as they are known in Wales) are shapeshifters who taken on the form of either small mammals or horses. Púca of the Seelie play pranks that make others laugh and teach fools and blowhards lessons, while the Unseelie are wicked tricksters whose jokes humiliate and sometimes even hurt their victims.

Horse púca love to lure would-be riders onto their backs; the rider then adheres to the púca and cannot get off before being taken on a wild ride. Seelie púca love to play silly games, such as scaring parents who watch their laughing children ride by on a bucking stallion or dropping an arrogant vicar face-first into the mud, while the Unseelie often end their rides in briar patches or with grievous injuries. A few of the horse púca, fallen to the influence of Crom Cruach, end their rides in ice-cold rivers, where these water-horses drown their riders and consume their flesh.

Traits: Whether in their natural animal form or in their diminutive three foot tall, animal-featured humanoid forms, púca use the stats as per animals of their normal type with a +2 to all Physical Attributes, and Mental and Social Attributes of at least 2. Púca have a Legend of 2 and occasionally develop Epic Attributes. They all bear the Virtues of the Tuatha, save for water-horses and other twisted púca, who hold to the Virtues of the Titans.

Sluagh Sídhe (Guide •••)

The fairy host of the Underworld, the sluah sídhe are not aes sídhe. Rather, they are the ghosts of the Irish dead who have been taken into the courts of the Unseelie in Tir na Marbh. They are dark and ephemeral, like pieces of black veil caught in the wind, and they follow the Unseelie of the Underworld everywhere. Hosts of the sluah sídhe ride the winds on nights of the dark moon, peeking into windows and listening to conversations, bringing their masters word of goings-on in the World.

Traits: Sluagh sídhe have the same traits as normal ghosts, save for one difference: Their Move and Dash actions can take them through open air, allowing them to effectively flit about in all three dimensions. Additionally, while standing in areas of pure darkness, the sluah sídhe can be seen by those who make a (Perception + Awareness) roll with a difficulty equal to the ghost's Legend.

RELICS

The Cauldron of Dagda

Relic ••• (1 Purview, 1 Unique Two-Dot Power)

The Cauldron of Dagda is one of the four treasures the Tuatha brought with them from Tír na nÓg. The Dagda brought it from the city of Murias. It is known as *Undry* because, when filled with water, it never empties unless the cauldron is deliberately tipped out and drained. The Cauldron of Dagda can produce food in it without any effort, and the amount of food can feed an army. The Cauldron also has the power to heal any wound short of death.

With the Cauldron of Dagda, a Scion may access the Health Purview. The Cauldron also holds a unique power: Once per day, the water may be drained from the Cauldron and, at its owner's command, it will instead fill with solid, nourishing food in great quantity. This food is usually the sort meant to sustain an army of warriors: beef stew, hearty chicken soup or even mounds of ribs smothered in barbecue sauce. Scions have used the Cauldron's powers for more humanitarian reasons as well.

Gae Bolga

Relic ••• (1 Purview, 1 Unique Two-Dot Power)

The Gae Bolga was the spear of the hero Cúchulainn. Crafted from the largest bone in the body of a sea serpent, once it's been thrown and enters the body of its target, the spear opens and dispenses numerous barbs into the flesh. The spear does even more damage when yanked or cut out of the body. Cúchulainn used it on at least two occasions: once while fighting a duel against his best friend, Ferdiad, and another time against his son, Connla, who he had never before met. Both times, the wound inflicted was almost instantly fatal.

Any Scion who possesses Gae Bolga has access to the War Purview. Further, after an attack, the weilder can do the same damage again by successfully yanking the spear out on a successful (Strength + Melee) roll (against the target's (Strength + Athletics) if they resist).

The Spear of Lugh

Relic ••• (3 Purviews)

The Spear of Lugh, or Spear Lúin, is one of the greatest weapons in Ireland. Lugh brought it with him from the city of Gorias in Tír na nÓg, and it was with this spear that Lugh wounded the fearsome Titan Balor of the Evil Eye.

The shaft of the spear is made with oak, and the head is of a strange milky white crystal. Furthermore, the spear's

head drips blood and burns so fiercely hot that, in the past, it would burn down wherever it was kept if it is not submerged in the Dagda's Cauldron. Enchantments have been placed on the Spear more recently, and when not in use by whichever Scion holds it, it is kept in a space outside this dimension. The spear is summoned forth when needed and returned to that no-place when its owner is finished with it. The spear is also capable of hurling attacks of lightning and ice.

With the spear, the Scion who uses it can access the Fire, Sky and War Purviews.

The Stone of Destiny

Relic ••••• (3 Purviews, 1 Unique Two-Dot Power)

The Tuatha brought the Lia Fáil (or Stone of Destiny) to Ireland from the city of Fáilias in Tír na nÓg. It is enchanted to detect those whose destiny it is to rule over Ireland. In the past, the stone would sing if the man who was meant to be High King stepped on it. In modern times, it will sing if stepped on by anyone with the soul and will to lead Ireland out of its troubles. It is also said to be able to restore an aging king to his youth and vitality. The stone that is said to be the Lia Fáil (currently located at the Inauguration Mound at Tara in Ireland) is a forgery. The true Lia Fáil was spirited away by one of the Tuatha's Scions centuries ago, so that it might not fall into the hands of titanspawn.

Any Scion who possesses the Lia Fáil has access to the Guardian and Justice Purviews, as justice and the duty of guarding his subjects are two qualities a true king must always possess. The stone also grants the Health Purview, and as a unique power it will restore someone of advanced age to a much younger state.

The Sword of Light

Relic •••• (4 Purviews)

Known as Claíomh Solais, the Sword of Light was brought to Ireland from the city of Finias in Tír na nÓg by Nuada, who wielded it in many battles against the fomorians. When unsheathed, it glows with a brilliant light that blinds titanspawn and mortals alike. The light also makes it appear that the wielder's hand has been transformed to silver, although this is only an illusion. It is capable of slicing people in half.

Scions who possess the sword have access to the Guardian, Justice, Sun and War Purviews.

Other Relics

Irish history contains a wealth of mighty relics that the Tuatha might provide to new Scions. Some examples include Aengus' sword Moralltach, Mannanan's sword Fragarach and the Dagda's harp Daurdabla.

Scions of the Tuatha Dé Danann

The Scions of the Tuatha are vigorous folk, given to fighting, partying and lovemaking in equal measure. The following are two sample Scions of the Tuatha: one a Scion of Lugh, presented as a beginning hero-level Scion, and the other a Scion of the Morrigan, presented as a demigod-level Scion.

LOUISE "LOU" MACETHAN
SCION OF LUGH

Louise always knew she was meant for great things. Not because she was inherently better than anyone else. It's just that her mother was a strict advocate of the idea that those who worked were those who won. Talent got you only so far — it was hard work that made someone great.

Still, it helped that Lou was really talented at just about everything she tried her hand at. She excelled academically with hardly any effort whatsoever. She split her time between the gymnastics floor and the stage, loving both of them dearly. When she was sixteen, she competed in the Olympics for the United States, and only the sudden death of her mother prevented her from going all the way to the gold (something she still regrets to this day).

The exposure from the Olympics still did her quite a lot of good, however. By the time she was eighteen, she'd been in multiple commercials, and when her talent agent discovered her singing voice, he quickly flipped that into a record deal. She was well on her way to a life of fame and fortune when Cooshie found her.

At first, the big dog scared her a little, but when she saw how nervous he made everyone else, she was determined to be the one to approach and befriend him. It was a point of pride that he took to her as immediately as he did. Things grew stranger, though, when he led her to the odd fellow practicing alone in the stadium at night. Fortunately, the gorgeous man there turned out to be shining Lugh, her father. He told her of her legacy, and that she was, in fact, inherently better than most. How could she not be, with the blood of a God in her veins?

Her life is certainly more difficult of late, what with battling fomorians and meeting others like her. Still, Lou knows that she's up to the task — after all, she's never met a challenge she couldn't overcome, and this whole Scion thing is just one more challenge. Right?

Roleplaying Hints: Lou is bright and cheerful, though she's not naïve or vapid. She is just happy to meet any challenge head-on and tackle it to the best of her ability. Though she would never admit such, she loves the adoration that others give her and does her best to show off without seeming to show off. On some level, though, her Visitation has shaken her. She can't get rid of the nagging suspicion that all of her victories up until now have simply been because she *is* better than other people. They weren't her victories — they were her father's. She also finds being around other Scions somewhat disconcerting; it's difficult to shine when those around can do everything with as much ease as she can.

Birthrights: Lou is always accompanied by Cooshie, her pure white Irish wolfhound with red ears (its coloration a sure sign of otherworldliness to those who know their Irish mythology). She always wears her bronze cloak pin depicting a vertical spear behind the head of a dog, usually either at her waist or on her lapel. This pin grants her access to the Animal, Health and Magic Purviews. Her spear is the Spear of Lugh (see pp. 30-31 for more details).

Geasa: *The Bard's Geas.* Louise is bound by a Legendary Skill Geas, associated with her Art (Singing) Ability. She acquired it when she took the Hero's Geas (the second power in the Enech Pantheon Purview). Lou regains Legend at double the normal rate, and additionally regains a single point of Legend each time her dedication to improving her singing skills makes her life difficult.

SCION
HERO

Name	Calling	Pantheon
Louise "Lou" MacEthan	Superstar	Tuatha Dé Danaan
Player	Competitor	Lugh
	Nature	**God**

ATTRIBUTES

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●○○○○○○○○	Charisma	●●●●●○○○○○	Perception	●●○○○○○○○○
Dexterity	●●●●○○○○○○	Manipulation	●●○○○○○○○○	Intelligence	●●○○○○○○○○
Stamina	●●●○○○○○○○	Appearance	●●●●○○○○○○	Wits	●●●○○○○○○○

ABILITIES

□ Academics	●○○○○	□ Craft	○○○○○	■ Melee	●●●○○
□ Animal Ken	●●○○○	□	○○○○○	■ Occult	●●●○○
■ Art (Acting)	●●○○○	□	○○○○○	□ Politics	○○○○○
■ Art (Singing)	●●●●○	□ Empathy	○○○○○	□ Presence	●●○○○
■ Athletics	●●●●○	□ Fortitude	●●○○○	□ Science	○○○○○
□ Awareness	●○○○○	■ Integrity	●●●○○	□	○○○○○
□ Brawl	●●○○○	□ Investigation	○○○○○	□	○○○○○
□ Command	○○○○○	□ Larceny	○○○○○	□ Stealth	○○○○○
□ Control	○○○○○	□ Marksmanship	○○○○○	□ Survival	○○○○○
□	○○○○○	□ Medicine	●●○○○	■ Thrown	●●●●○

BIRTHRIGHTS

Creature (Cooshie – large Irish wolfhound) 2

Relic (Spear of Lugh) 3

Relic (Cloak Pin -Animal Health and Magic Purview) 3

WEAPONS

Spear of Lugh- Acc 7, Dmg 5 L, Parry DV 4, Spd 5;

Spear of Lugh, thrown - Acc 7, Dmg 5 L-P, Rng 10, Spd 6

KNACKS

Blessing of Importance, Cat's Grace, Center of Attention, Inspirational Figure, Social Chameleon, Untouchable Opponent

BOONS

Animal Communication (Dog), Assess Health, Brehon's Eye, Hero's Geas, Magic 1

Spells: The Unlidded Eye

WILLPOWER

●●●●●●○○○○

□□□□□□□□□□

SOAK

A____ L 2 B 3

ARMOR

None

A____ L____ B____

HEALTH

0	-1	-1	-2	-2	-4	I
□	□	□	□	□	□	□

VIRTUES

Courage	●●○○○
Expression	●●●●○
Intellect	●○○○○
Piety	●●○○○

LEGEND

●●●○○○

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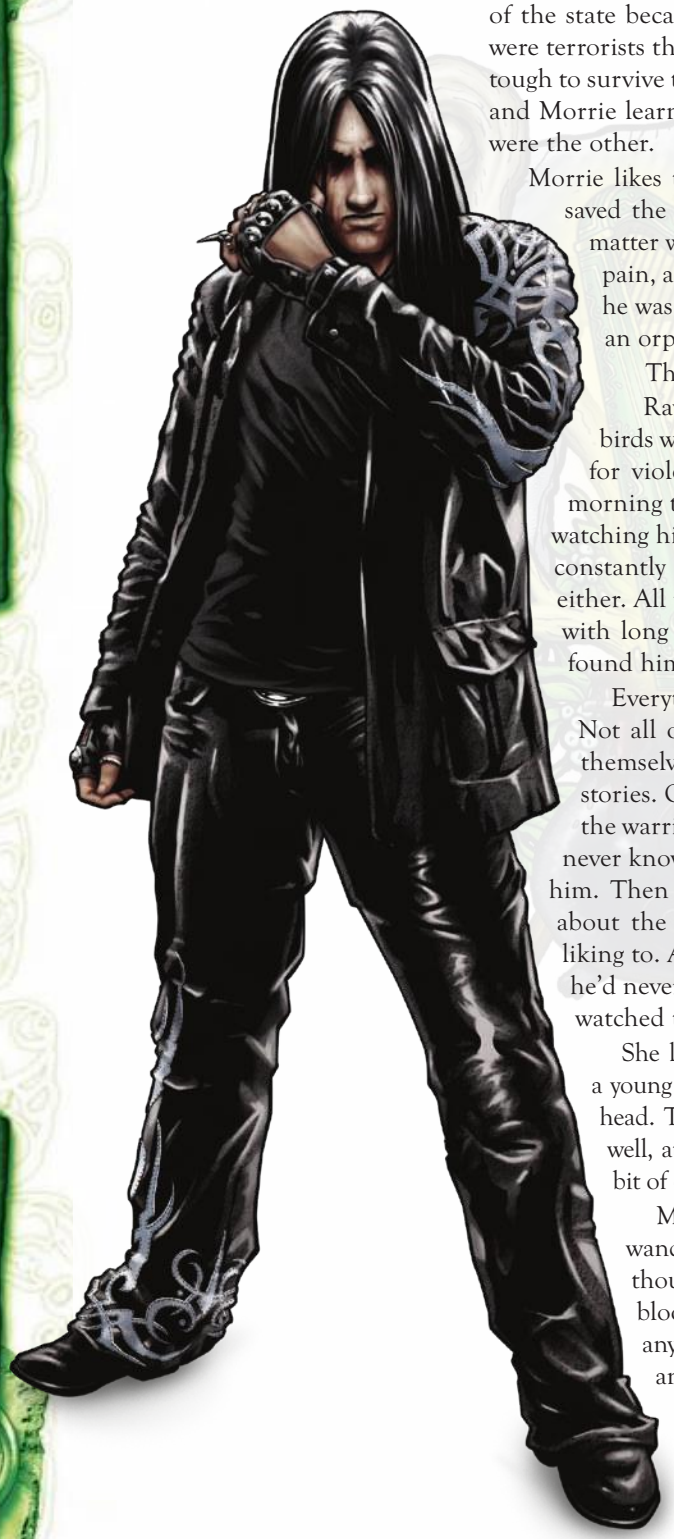
Legend Points 9 | ____

EXPERIENCE

LOUISE MACETHAN

LOUISE MACETHAN

MORRIS "MORRIE" CORBIN
SCION OF THE MORRIGAN



Morris (who insists that his friends call him "Morrie") has been at this for a while. The Irish have killed one another in the northern parts of the country since before old Patrick brought Christianity to the island. Morrie grew up an orphan, and he knew plenty of kids who were wards of the state because their parents had been killed in terrorist attacks (or were terrorists themselves). State wardships were tough, and you had to be tough to survive them. Most kids in the system are either bullies or victims, and Morrie learned early on that if you weren't one, people assumed you were the other.

Morrie likes to tell people that he was a "heroic bully," the kind that saved the smaller kids from the other bullies. But the truth of the matter was that he was an angry little cuss with a talent for causing pain, and he used it to get his way as often as he could. By the time he was sixteen, he was spending more time in reform school than an orphanage.

That was when the ravens started showing up.

Ravens aren't like other corvids. They're not simply black birds writ big: They're practically raptors in their size and capacity for violence. Something like Morrie himself. He woke up one morning to find a trio of massive ravens perched on his windowsill, watching him like they hoped he was dead. For the next week, he was constantly surrounded by them. He wasn't the only one to notice, either. All the other kids started avoiding him, and he found himself with long bouts of solitude on his hands, long bouts in which he found himself speaking to the ravens.

Everything changed, of course, when they started speaking back. Not all of them, mind – just the three of them who introduced themselves as Nemain, Macha and Babd. They told him strange stories. Old stories at first, about the ancient Phantom Queen and the warriors of Ulster. He recognized the names, certainly, but he'd never known the full extent of the stories until the three ravens told him. Then they told him tales that weren't in any books — stories about the Morrigan and the rough Irish dock worker she took a liking to. About how she stayed with him long enough to know that he'd never be able to raise a boy on his own, and how carefully she'd watched that boy since.

She liked his spirit, the birds said. He was tough and mean, like a young rook himself. He looked like her, they said, black of eye and head. They offered to show him something and led him to the old well, at the bottom of which he found his Birthrights wrapped in a bit of old burlap.

Morrie spent the first several years after his Visitation wandering. He fell in with a variety of biker gangs along the way, though he's always ended up going his own way — his love of bloodshed and violence has made it difficult to remain around anyone, even in such grizzled company as the Hell's Angels and the Pagans. When he achieved his Hero's Geas, this propensity crystallized into a full-on need to seek out skilled combatants and test himself against them.

Late one Samhain night, his mother came to him in her regal aspect as the Phantom Queen. For the first time in his life, Morrie felt something other than belligerence and cussedness — he experienced actual anger. Though she bested him handily, to this day Morrie feels that the most therapeutic thing he's ever done was to attack his divine mother. After she threw him time and again, he admitted that he'd worked it out of his system. They talked long into the cold night about the nature of the World and her expectations of his place in it, and he's wandered ever since as a demigod, fulfilling that role.

Roleplaying Hints: It's hard not to be jaded about violence when you grew up in the middle of the "Irish troubles" of the latter half of the twentieth century. Morris didn't know anyone who was part of the IRA or anything like that. It might have been better if he had, really — he might have been able to put a face to the tragedy, to personalize it some. He simply grew up with the reality that, at any point, everyone around him might suddenly be dead.

As a result, Morrie himself doesn't hesitate to throw down. On some level, the opportunity to indulge in some sudden ultra-violence is a relief to him. He goes through life with the expectation building in him that everything will go to shit. It makes him jittery and prone to getting drunk. He's most at peace the morning after a big, brutal fight. On those mornings, he almost smiles at his beaten image in the mirror as he tends to his bruises and broken bones.

Birthrights: In the Morrigan's Well, Morrie found a set of biker's leathers marked with intricate white knotwork on one leg and arm (a set of Relic armor that grants a +2 soak above the normal soak of biker leathers). The black fingerless gloves tucked into the pocket of the set act as a Relic granting access to the Chaos Purview, and the small silver raven skull hung on a chain grants access to the Animal and Death Purviews. Shortly after he received his Visitation, Morrie was visited by a bean sídhe named Aithne, who has acted as his Guide and occasional lover ever since.

When he achieved demigodhood, his mother empowered his leathers to better defend him for the tasks she set to him (increasing his Relic-based soak by another +2, for a total of +4), and she gave him the small brooch that calls forth a Flock of the Morrigan.

Geasa: Morrie is bound by his Hero's Geas, which functions as the Legendary Sword geas. Additionally, he and his bean sídhe Guide Aithne are more than simply lovers: they have bound one another's wrists with black ribbon under the Beltane boughs, watched over by a murder of crows. The crows, as a wedding gift, promised that he would find more of them in himself when he called on his crow's blood, but only so long as he held fast to his devotion to Aithne. This functions as a Boon (Animal Aspect) Handfast geas.

Other Notes: When Morrie activates his *riadstrad*, he also activates the following Knacks and Boons at the same time, for a total cost of 12 Legend (+2 Legend/action that Animal Aspects apply): Animal Aspect (Corvids — Dexterity), Animal Aspect (Corvids — Wits), Animal Feature (Corvids), Divine Bound, Untouchable Opponent, Warrior Ideal.

Morrie's use of the Animal Feature Boon is generally used to gain one or more of the following:

- A set of wicked talons (see weapons).
- Hollow bones, which add +3 to his effective (Strength + Athletics) for the purpose of determining how far he can leap.
- Black raven's eyes, granting a +3 bonus to all sight-based Perception rolls.

SCION
DEMIGOD

MORRIS CORBIN

Morris "Morrie" Corbin Name	Wandering Troublemaker Calling	Tuatha Dé Danaan Pantheon
 Player	Cynic Nature	The Morrigan God

ATTRIBUTES

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●●●●○○○○○ ■■■■□□□□□□	Charisma	●●●○○○○○○○ □□□□□□□□□□	Perception	●●●●●○○○○○ ■■□□□□□□□□
Dexterity	●●●●○○○○○○ ■■□□□□□□□□	Manipulation	●●●○○○○○○○ □□□□□□□□□□	Intelligence	●●○○○○○○○○ □□□□□□□□□□
Stamina	●●●●●○○○○○ ■■■□□□□□□□	Appearance	●●●●○○○○○○ ■□□□□□□□□□	Wits	●●●●●○○○○○ □□□□□□□□□□

ABILITIES

□ Academics	○○○○○	□ Craft	○○○○○	■ Melee	○○○○○
■ Animal Ken	●●○○○	□	○○○○○	□ Occult	●●○○○
□ Art	○○○○○	□	○○○○○	□ Politics	○○○○○
□	○○○○○	□ Empathy	●○○○○	□ Presence	●●●●○
□ Athletics	●●●○○	■ Fortitude	●○○○○	□ Science	○○○○○
□ Awareness	●●●○○	□ Integrity	●●○○○	□	○○○○○
■ Brawl	●●●●●	□ Investigation	●●●○○	□	○○○○○
□ Command	○○○○○	□ Larceny	●●●○○	□ Stealth	●●●○○
□ Control	○○○○○	■ Marksmanship	●○○○○	□ Survival	●●○○○
□	○○○○○	□ Medicine	○○○○○	■ Thrown	●●○○○

BIRTHRIGHTS

Guide 3 (Aithne, Bean sídhe)

Relic (Silver Raven Skull – Animal and Death Purview) 2

Relic (Black Biker Gloves – Chaos Purview) 1

Relic (Leathers – +4 Soak) 4, Creature 2/

Relic 1 (The Flocks of the Morrigan)

WEAPONS

Unarmed, Heavy – Acc 8, Dmg 8B, Parry DV 4, Sp 5

Unarmed, Light – Acc 10, Dmg 5B, Parry DV 5, Spd 4

Raven Claws – Acc 10, Dam 7L, Parry DV 5, Spd 4

KNACKS

Blinding Visage, Crushing Grip, Damage Conversion, Devourer, Disfiguring Attack, Divine Bound, Divine Damage Conversion, Divine Wrath, Holy Bound, Inner Furnace, Knockback Attack, Knockback Wave, Monkey Climber, Predatory Focus, Roll With It, Self-Healing, Supernal Hunter, Untouchable Opponent

BOONS

Animal Aspect (Corvids), Animal Command (Corvids), Animal Communication (Corvids), Animal Feature (Corvids), Death Senses, Enoch 1-4, Hornet's Nest, Prophecy 2, Rástrad, Warrior Ideal

WILLPOWER

●●●●●●●●○○

□□□□□□□□□□

SOAK

A 3 L 11 B 15

ARMOR

Leathers

A ____ L +4 B +6

EXPERIENCE

VIRTUES

Courage	●●●○○
Expression	●○○○○
Intellect	●●○○○
Piety	●●●○○

LEGEND

●●●●●●○○○○○○ 36 Legend Points

HEALTH

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COSMOLOGY

The cosmology of the Tuatha Dé Danaan is a complex and interwoven one. The interactions between the World, Underworld and Overworld have often been confused in the passing down of mythological and folkloric sources, to say nothing of the kind of conceptual drift that happens over generations.

When the Children of Danu originally came to the World and settled in the land of Eire, they left behind their otherworldly paradise, Tír na nÓg and its four great cities, bringing with them the lesser divinities that would one day come to be called the aes sídhe. Eventually, though, the races of men came to Eire with weapons of cold iron, and the Tuatha were impressed with their mettle, their beauty and their love of the Green Isle. They ceded Eire to the Milesians and gave them the land itself while they maintained dominance over what lay beneath it — partially as a means of defending these fragile men from the depredations of the wicked Crom Cruach, the White Worm that lay beneath the ground.

TÍR NA MARBH (UNDERWORLD)

AKA: The Cold Lands, Summer's End

The lands of the Irish dead are a place of autumnal beauty. Mist lies heavily on the ground, occasionally rising up to create fantastic silhouettes in the dying light. The lands themselves seem to vary in climate and season. In some places, it is a deep autumn, with fiery leaves on every branch and the smell of a nearly-ready harvest in the air. In others, it is deep winter, where the wind howls and carries a razor sleet.

But the lands of the Irish dead were not always this way. In truth, Tír na Marbh is not even the proper, ancient name for this place. Rather, Tír na Marbh occupies a portion of the greater realm known as Annwyn, the home of the Welsh dead.

The Secret History of the Underworld

Once, the Irish dead traveled to Mag Mell, the Plain of Joy. Here they lived out their afterlives in peace and prosperity, wanting for nothing. Of course, there was one difficulty — when the fomorians were driven from Eire by the Tuatha, the twisted get of Balor and Cethlenn fled to the Underworld, seeking to follow their creators as best as they might.

Of course, to the dead who dwelt here, the presence of these fomorians was simply the natural order of things. Those spirits who had been warriors in life knew that their defense of their tribe did not end in death. Indeed, it became more important, for no one could die in Mag Mell. The slavery to and torments of the twisted fomorians could conceivably continue for all of eternity, and that idea was utterly anathema to the freedom-loving dead of the Plain of Joy.

Then, something changed.

The fomorians were not idle in their time in Mag Mell. They were themselves denied the benefits of Mag Mell's immortality, and they were not fools: For each of them that died, there was one less fomorian, so every death was calculated and precise. The Tuatha never really noticed what was going on, noting only that the ghosts of the dead fought the fomorians. If the dead noticed that every one of the fomorians who died did so with a joyful gleam in his eyes and strange markings on his skin, they likely passed it off as simply another mad trait of the twisted monsters who were the enemies of their Gods.

In time, though, this great ritual sacrifice was completed, and something *gave*. A great wintery storm came over Mag Mell, and the dead were terrified, for their Plain of Joy was always on the cusp between spring and summer. When this storm passed, Cethlenn (the mother of fomorians) stood on the Plain of Joy, and the dead were nowhere to be found.

In very short order, things changed. The ritual of the fomorians managed the impossible: It unmoored Mag Mell from the Underworld, cracking the prison of the Titans just enough to allow Cethlenn to escape. Mag Mell itself, cast free, latched onto the pull of the World, becoming one of the first of the terrae incognitae. The dead were swept away by the great wintery storm that accompanied that transformation and cast into the Void.

In a panic, the Tuatha called up their allies. While the Morrigan and the other Tuatha associated with the dead traveled into the Void to rescue as many of the Irish ghosts as they could, Danu approached the king of the Welsh afterlife, Gwyn ap Nudd. With her traveled Gwyn ap Nudd's father, Nuada. For nine days and nine nights they spoke behind closed doors in Annwn, the Welsh Underworld; when the doors opened, part of Annwn had already transformed, creating a sanctuary for the Irish dead at Gwyn ap Nudd's command. Once their dead were safely ensconced in this portion of Annwn, which came to be called Tír na Marbh by the ghosts of the Irish tribes, the Tuatha turned their full might and fury to Cethlenn and her get.

For centuries they fought. The Tuatha, though mighty, were hard pressed to match Cethlenn's fury. Her children were seemingly innumerable, and Mag Mell's connections to the World meant that the Tuatha and their aes sídhe army had to direct their focus on stopping the fomorians from entering the World as well as trying to destroy them utterly.

Finally, Cethlenn was defeated and bound once more, along with the greater host of her children. She left a gift for those who defeated her, however.

Once the gods realized that they had no idea how to reverse the Titanic magics and shift Mag Mell back to the Underworld, the seeds of Cethlenn's corruption took hold, and those gods who saw the Plain of Joy — now vibrant and uplifting to mortal life — were seized with the desire to claim it for their own. Battles broke out between the Tuatha, the Welsh gods and even the Aesir Gods who saw these lands. Seelie warred with Unseelie aes sídhe over its possession as well, and all might have ended in tragedy were it not for Manannán mac Lir's calm head and wisdom. He bade the gods on the field of battle to pluck the maggots from their brains. To their surprise, they found just that squirming about in their heads.

Manannán promised to hold Mag Mell for all the gods who had any kind of claim to that land, swearing that any of them might take it. He bade Danu to bind him by a geas to that effect, and she did so, proud of his wisdom and clarity. (The rest of the story of Mag Mell is told on p. 116 of **Scion: Demigod**.)

Over time, Tír na Marbh has grown into a strange, dark reflection of Tír na nÓg. Like the great Overworld realm of the Tuatha, the lands of the dead can be divided into four parts, with a single great royal palace in the center. In the case of Tír na Marbh, the Veiled Court (the seat of the Unseelie aes sídhe) sits in the center, surrounded by the four areas, each of which is home to three of the Tribes of the Dead.

The Veiled Court

The Veiled Court is a great Irish *dun*-style keep crafted of black stone and open to the elements. The walls are manned by the sluagh sídhe, the shadowy ghosts of the dead claimed by the Unseelie as their servants. In the center of the court sits the Samhain Seat, a great blackthorn tree that has twisted and shaped itself into the rough approximation of a throne. In this tree, ravens perch eternally and watch what goes on there on behalf of their mistress, the Morrigan, who claims this seat as her own.

Her seneschal is an Unseelie aes sídhe of great power called the Queen of Air and Darkness. Though the Queen of Air and Darkness was once the bean sídhe responsible for keening the deaths of the Irish royal family, that line has long since died out as a cogent entity, and she wears a long black mourning veil for all eternity.

All spirits that come to Tír na Marbh come first to the Veiled Court, whose scholars and heralds declare the destination of those dead into one of the Twelve Tribes of the Dead.

The Twelve Tribes of the Dead

All spirits that come to these lands appear first in the Veiled Court and are then sent to one of the Tribes. The four lands have no names, by compact with Gwyn ap Nudd — he will not tolerate the Irish dead laying claim to Annwn.

Each of the lands has three tribes: a tribe of the Mad, a tribe of the Ancient Dead and a tribe of the Modern Dead. The tribes of the Mad are all made up of ghosts that once resided in Mag Mell and are among those retrieved from the Void. All of them have been driven inexorably insane, and they are terrible, savage creatures who eat the ghostly flesh of anyone they catch, painting themselves in the pale fluids they render from those unfortunates souls.

The tribes of the Ancient Dead are made up of the ghosts of those who died before the coming of Christianity to Ireland, but after the establishment of Tír na Marbh. These men and women are the most like the tribes of ancient Ireland and are careful to welcome visitors appropriately, often going out of their way to save them from the hunting parties of the Mad and guide them to their final destinations. Their bards sing ancient songs long forgotten in the World, and their druids are wise in the ways of the dead.

The final tribes are made of up those Irish who died after the time of Padraig (St. Patrick), who brought Christianity to the isle. These tribes are often the smallest of the tribes, for the Virtues of the Tuatha were not the Virtues of the White Christ. Rare was the man or woman that embodied those Virtues and reverence of the Tuatha sufficiently to come here after death. Still, the population of these tribes is made up of people who refused to adhere to Christianity. These people either carried forth a family tradition strongly wrapped up in reverence of Ireland itself and the various spirits of that land or perhaps venerated one or more of the Irish saints — many of which were simply new names for old Tuatha Dé Danaan — more than was technically appropriate.

Passages to Tír na Marbh

Passage into Tír na Marbh is a difficult thing to accomplish most of the time. The following methods are used to pass into the lands of the Irish dead.

Tombs and Funerary Architecture: The funerary barrows of Ireland provide access to Tír na Marbh. A creature of sufficient Legend that enters into one of these barrows at night and spends a point of Legend finds himself in one of the subterranean caverns beneath the Veiled Court, welcomed by one of the sluagh sídhe.

Natural Features: Ireland is criss-crossed with sídhe, the strangely round "hollow hills" that Irish

folklore warns are the abode of fairies. Created by the Fir Bolg, these hills do not register as hollow to any mortal methods of examination, nor can their doorways be found. But to creatures of Legend, these mounds reveal their secrets to those who know what to look for.

These sídhe are more than simply hollow mounds, however: They are the passages into the Otherworld. From Samhain to Beltaine (approximately the first of November to the first of May), when the Unseelie are given power in the World, a sídhe acts as a means of entering the Underworld. However, from Beltaine to Samhain, when the Seelie are given power in the World, a sídhe acts as an Axis Mundi into the Overworld of Tír na nÓg (see below for more details). Regardless of where a given sídhe would take one, however, they only function during the nighttime hours or during dawn and dusk.

Rituals: The funerary rites of ancient Ireland are not truly known any longer, having been replaced utterly by Christian rites. Such rituals must be researched, as detailed on p. 144 of **Scion: Demigod**.

Times: The veil is parted between the World and Tír na Marbh on Samhain night, the night of October 31st. It remains easy to pass between the worlds from that night until November 2nd, during the nighttime only.

Tír na nÓg

The great lands of Tír na nÓg act as the Overworld for the Tuatha Dé Danaan. At the center of this land is the Eternal Orchard, the grove that acts as the court for the aes sídhe of the Seelie. This great apple orchard sits on a mist-surrounded island in the middle of a great body of water, from which four rivers flow in the cardinal directions.

These rivers gradually widen as they flow outward, eventually opening so much that their edges meet and completely surround the whole of Tír na nÓg in a great body of clockwise-flowing water.

At their widest, these rivers have a massive island in the middle of their flow, at the very edges of this Overworld. On these islands sit the four Noble Cities of Tír na nÓg: Falias the Great sits in the River of the Boar to the north, Gorias the Shining is surrounded by the River of the Hawk to the east, Finias the Glorious sits in the River of the Stag in the south, and Murias the Rich is in the River of the Salmon in the west.

Though the Gods maintain their halls within the great cities, the cities themselves — populated by the aes sídhe and the servants of the greater Tuatha — are watched over by ancient druids chosen from the wisest of the aes sídhe priest-savants. Even the Tuatha do not know as much about the cities as these druids, and they often serve as advisors and friends for the Tuatha that make their homes in these cities.

Falias the Great

Falias the Great is a city of ice-green spires touched by frost. White ravens fly among the snapping banners, and the only light that touches it comes from the pale twilight stars above. Dawn in Falias is heralded by the brilliant display of an aurora in the sky.

The druid Morfessa is the regent of Falias. He is an ancient, bearded aes sídhe clad in robes of a brilliant white color that reflect the hues in the world around him. A raven sits on his shoulder, perfectly white in color with pale-green eyes, and the two often whisper to one another. He wears a diadem of pale silver on his brow set with a gemstone that is the Morning Star.

Gorias the Shining

Gorias the Shining sits in the east, a city of tall opalescent towers touched with gold accents. In Gorias can be found all the colors of the dawn — sweet dusky gold, the shimmering of rose and ghostly violets. Gorias' natural lighting is veiled and misty, the light of the early morning, and beautiful gold hawks are everywhere.

The druid-smith Esras acts as Regent to the city, though one wouldn't know it to look at him. He is an older aes sídhe, with a close-cropped beard and head of hair that are both salt and peppered, with small singed spots from his work at the forge. His forge overlooks the square where the Silent Hero stands. He wears a simple woolen kilt and a leather apron appropriate to his work.

Finias the Glorious

Finias the Glorious sits in the south. Its tall elegant towers of silver, brass and white marble are illuminated all hours of the days and night by the white-hot fires of the summer sun. The night in Finias is short, and the horizon on all sides is touched with a deep red glow, as though great flames burnt just over the hills, waiting to spring up at a moment's notice.

The fair-haired druid-poet Uscias acts as Regent for Finias. He is a veritable priest of the imbas, and those who come near him cannot help but feel their own creative urges rise. He is a fair, youthful looking aes sídhe, with long blonde-white hair and a smooth face. He wears brilliant colors, and a torc of bronze and silver to denote his status in the city.

Murias the Rich

The regal city of Murias the Rich stands in the west. Its towers are crafted of a deep blue stone, with accents of silver-shot white marble Twilight reigns in Murias, and the lingering light of dusk is found here. Murias is also called the Sunken City, for it appears

as though its streets are under deep water. In truth, though, Murias is a city with streets of water, and the aes sídhe who dwell here pole through its streets in sleek, swan-like white boats.

The healer Senias acts as Regent-druid of Murias. A gentle, bearded aes sídhe with hair the color of chestnut, he dresses in simple dark green robes, with a simple torc of bronze and mother-of-pearl his only ornamentation.

The Eternal Orchard

In the center of Tír na nÓg, acting as the wellspring from which the waters of the Otherworld flow, is the Eternal Orchard. A massive grove of apple and oak trees, the Eternal Orchard is home to the *aes sídhe* of the Seelie Court. In its center on a small hill grows a pair of massive trees, one oak and one apple. These two trees have twisted together like a pair of lovers and grown into the shape of a throne. Though this is traditionally called the Throne of Brigid, it is offered to any of the Tuatha Dé Danaan who visit here. At the foot of the throne sits a great well, which any of the Tuatha might use to command a view of anyplace in Tír na nÓg.

The Herald of Spring and Summer acts as the regent for the Eternal Orchard in the absence of any of the Tuatha. He is an ancient aes sídhe, a godling in his own right, though not one that has ever traveled to the World. He is incredibly fair to gaze on, and his bright singing voice is the pride of the Eternal Orchard.

Axis Mundi: The Sídhe

The hollow hills of the Good Neighbors, the sídhe are the Worldly reflections of the hills upon which both the Eternal Orchard and the Veiled Court are built. There is a season for each, though — from Samhain to Beltaine, a sídhe acts as a passage into the Underworld, because the World is given over to the Unseelie to rule in the dark half of the year. From Beltaine to Samhain, however, the same hollow hill serves as passage to Tír na nÓg, granting passage to those who know how to find such things — or are led there by others — to the Land of Youth.

These hills are cunningly constructed by the Fir Bolg, who use their affinity with earth to create luxurious halls that are bigger within than without. Each of these sídhe are given to a lord of the aes sídhe and his vassals to use as their home while they are within the World. More importantly, though, anyone entering the doorway at night may spend a point of Legend to travel to the Underworld (if it is between the first of November and the first of May) or to the Overworld (if it is between the first of May and the first of November). This is, of course, assuming that the individual in question has the potency to do so, as detailed in **Scion: Demigod** and **Scion: God**.

THE HALLOWS OF IRELAND AS AXES MUNDI

The four great treasures that the Tuatha Dé Danaan brought to Ireland with them from the Four Great Cities are more than simply tokens or pieces of regalia. They are, in a very real way, part of those four great cities. Each of these Relics is also a miniature Axis Mundi tied not to Tír na nÓg as a whole, but to the city from which it was taken: the Lia Fáil is from Falias, the Spear Luin is from Gorias, the Claíomh Solais is from Finias and the Undry Cauldron is from Murias.

Any god or other creature of appropriate Legend capable of using an Axis Mundi may utilize one of these items. By placing it upon the ground and spending a point of Legend, they are transported to the appropriate city in question. The one so wielding that Relic may choose to take the Relic with him, in which case he must return via one of the normal sídhe Axes Mundi of Tír na nÓg. He may also leave the Relic in the World, which will allow him to travel from his destination city back to the World where his Relic is. Of course, doing so means leaving the Relic behind in the World, always a decision of some careful consideration.

Titan: Crom Cruach — Earth

AKA: Most Foul, The Maggot God, The White Worm, The Great Maggot

To the Tuatha and their children, Crom Cruach is everything ill and foul in the world. In many ways, he represents the polar opposite of the Tuatha: He is the World in winter, the earth as a place of death and stagnation without any life save that which promotes rot. This Titan is the madness of the dark and of isolation, a place in which all that is bright is extinguished and made soiled. The Morrigan's wintery aspects are of fertility past its prime or the points in time between cycles of fecundity; the barrenness of Crom Cruach, on the other hand, is all-encompassing and eternal.

Crom Cruach is called the Maggot God because the creeping, squirming things beneath the earth are born of him. The old tribes were cautious when digging in the earth because they knew that, if they dug deep enough, they would find the pale whiteness of Crom Cruach waiting there. Though Crom Cruach is a fallow force, he has many servants. These are not birthed in the way that other Titans create their spawn. Crom Cruach prefers to corrupt where he can, sucking away fecundity and creativity the way a sponge soaks up water and leaving only dry hate and contempt for the living things.

Now that the great Crom Cruach is no longer imprisoned in the deep places of the Underworld, he has risen and laid siege to Tír na nÓg. His terrible bulk stinks of caustic, chemical fumes antithetical to growing things. The very soil becomes sandy and chalky and produces only horrors that hate the Children of Danu.

Favored Purviews: Animal (Worm-like Creatures), Darkness, Death, Earth, Frost (see **Scion: Ragnarök** for more information, or ignore this Purview)

Banned Purviews: Health, Sun

Prominent Features

The inner expanses of the Great Maggot are dark and claustrophobic. The air hangs heavy with some kind of chalky sediment, which lines the throat and lungs of those who breathe the stuff for months afterwards. Water is nowhere to be found; it soaks into the strange, dry silt of Crom Cruach's innards almost immediately, leaving no trace of its existence. Unlike many of the other Titans, Crom Cruach does not have discernable locations within its expanses — such things bespeak a desire for self-expression and identity that the Great Maggot does not possess. To Crom Cruach,

The Mathean Template

All creatures that dwell within the vast chalky expanses of Crom Cruach possess this template, which derives its name from the old Gaelic word for maggot, *mathe*. Creatures with this template are innately venomous, and though this venom may be delivered by bites or blades, it acts as Titanspawn Venom (Tolerance —, Damage 6L/action, Toxicity 3, Penalty –5).

Additionally, the flesh of such creatures is partially calcified, lending to the development of strangely callused portions that are insensate and tough. This negates all wound penalties and other penalties associated with pain, for such creatures are wholly numb and without feeling. Because they are very nearly all mad (many of them having literal maggots crawling in the soft meat of their brains), they are also immune to powers that inflict insanity on them.

Finally, when killed, creatures with this template collapse in on themselves, quickly drying out and portions of their bodies turning into a fine talc-like powder that explodes outwards with the creature's death throes. This causes a terrible choking sensation that acts as environmental damage (Mathean Death Cloud: Damage 5L/action, Trauma 3). These clouds linger and inflict damage for a number of actions equal to the creature's Legend.

Mathean creatures are immune to Boons from the Death Purview deployed by beings with lower Legend ratings. Attacks based on the Health and Sun Purviews, however, are considered to have the Piercing quality.

there is only dissolution. The Tuatha believe that Crom Cruach will not rest until it has crushed all things into rot and decay. Only then will it be content to cease moving and die itself.

Even now, Crom Cruach brings ruin to Tír na nÓg. A great circle of rotted vegetation surrounds the outer edges of the Land of the Young, and that circle occasionally bulges with tumor-like hills of white chalk. From out of these cancerous carbuncles tear titanspawn horrors and nemean centipedes, worms and other vile things, all intent on feasting on the verdant land. Crom Cruach has completely encircled the Overworld of the Tuatha Dé Danaan, and they fear that he burrows beneath them as well. The armies of the aes sídhe rally strongly, battling the hordes of fomorians that rise from the expanses of Crom Cruach's belly. Every fomorian foot that steps onto the Blessed Land does so at dear cost, but the Children of Danu cannot miss the fact that the foul creatures pay that cost gladly and often.

Sample Passages

The easiest way to travel into the belly of Crom Cruach is by digging into the rotted ground at the edges of Tír na nÓg. Eventually, the ground beneath the digger collapses and gives way, dumping the traveler deep into the stinking expanses of the White Worm.

In the World, a number of barrows on the British Isles are close enough to the chalk layer and riddled with sufficient rot that they serve as passages to Crom Cruach. A traveler of sufficient Legend may enter such a barrow and seal the passage behind him. When the darkness surrounding him begins to stink with a chemical acridness, he has come into the gullet of Crom Cruach.

The body of Terra touches on the expanses of the White Worm as well, and delving into caverns and barrows in Terra's form can lead to the worm-riddled caverns of Crom Cruach's body-realm.

CETHLENN

AKA: The Bane of the Dagda, She Whose Womb Is The Tomb

The Bane of the Dagda and the mother of fomorians, Cethlenn is the foremost aspect of Crom Cruach. Once, though, Crom Cruach also boasted a great champion: the one-eyed Balor, father of fomorians. Together, Balor and Cethlenn ruled the lands of the Green Isle. But Cethlenn is a prophetess of great insight, and she foresaw the coming of the Tuatha Dé Danaan and her husband's defeat at their hands. Still, she did not hesitate when the time came to raise her children-tribe against the fair Tuatha: So proud is the hideous Cethlenn that she would defy even Fate before she succumbed to another force. In that battle, she lost her husband but also struck the Dagda a terrible blow.

With the death of Balor, all that Cethlenn loved has been destroyed. The World holds only cold hate for her now; her children, the fomorians, are merely bitter reminders of what she has lost. Cethlenn would like nothing more than to see Eire sink beneath the waves, and if it can be done by her own hand then so much the better. She is the mother of stillbirths and a creature of rage and jealousy that will not hesitate to cast all of her children into death.

Cethlenn is still served by the fomorian tribes and by her handmaiden, the Cailleach. She also takes great joy in twisting normal creatures — particularly hounds, cattle, swans, ravens and other creatures blessed by the Tuatha — into outright horrors. From the clammy depths of her loins, she can produce fat, white grubs the size of a man's thumb. These things she bids her servants to spread among the foods of such animals.

Once the animals eat the grubs, one in three will be driven mad. They will frenzy, killing and eating one of their own or a nearby human being. When this happens, the affected animal twists and warps, becoming horrible versions of themselves, driven mad by maggots infesting their brains. The other two in three simply go mad, suffering from a species-specific, highly infectious version of mad cow disease.

Cethlenn appears as a hag-like woman, though she is tall of frame and not stooped in the least. Her lined face causes nightmares in those who gaze upon it, and her gray eyes reflect the fear of mortality that haunts men and Gods alike. She is dressed in black, tattered mourning clothing, and her chalk-white skin is bruised by patches of frostbitten flesh.

The Cailleach

The Winter Hag is Cethlenn's handmaiden and foremost servant. Where the mother of fomorians appears as an ancient regal queen, the Cailleach is nothing more than a crooked, twisted hag. The Cailleach's iron-gray hair hangs down in brittle strands, obscuring her face. Her hands are tipped in vicious blue-black cracked talons, and what teeth she has left are terrible fangs made of yellowed ice (which cause her breath to steam in all temperatures as though she were in the middle of a winter gale).

Though her mistress has long been imprisoned with the other Titans, the Tuatha never managed to capture the canny Cailleach. For centuries, she has plagued the Children of Danu and all they hold dear from her terra incognita caverns (accessed from Ceann na Cailleach, or the Hag's Head, which are the southernmost tip of the Cliffs of Moher in County Clare, Ireland).

As autumn fades into winter, she can be found in the waters of the Strait of Corryvreckan, between the islands of Jura and Scaraba off the west coast of Scotland. There she creates a terrible tempest that results in a whirlpool from which Corryvreckann (meaning "cauldron of the plaid") gets its name. In these frigid, swirling waters, she washes her plaid, which is dirtied with the soil and rains of the previous seasons. By the third day, when the whirlpool calms, her plaid is pure white, and winter truly begins.

The Cailleach bears a staff of old white wood, veined with cracks into which water has frozen. The touch of this staff can cause frost to form on whatever it strikes. She wears a cloak of white fox and wolf fur around her shoulders and a white plaid (a simple woven hip-garment, rather than something in the cross-lined design) around her hips.

Attributes: Str 7, Dex 5, Sta 8; Cha 2, Man 5, App 8; Per 4, Int 5, Wits 5

Virtues: Ambition 3, Malice 5, Rapacity 4, Zealotry 3

Abilities: Animal Ken 3, Athletics 4, Awareness 5, Brawl 5, Command 4, Empathy 3, Fortitude 5, Integrity 5, Investigation 3, Melee 5, Occult 5, Presence 3, Stealth 4

Supernatural Powers:

Boons: Animal Aspect (Worms — Strength, Stamina), Animal Command (Worms), Animal Communication (Worms), Animal Feature (Worms), Blizzard Call*, Chill the Blood*, Create Animal, Death Senses, Earth Armor, Earth Body, Earth Travel, Echo Sounding, Enech 7, Frost Immunity*, Frozen Panoply*, Landslide, Hrimthurssar's Touch*, Mother's Touch, Night Eyes, Prophecy 7, Safely Interred, Shadow Mask, Shadow Step, Shadow Shroud, Shaping, Sky's Grace, Storm Augmentation, Summon Ghost, Uller's Stride*, Wind's Freedom, Wind Grapple, Winter's Mercy*

(Note that Boons marked with an asterisk (*) are from the Frost Purview; see **Scion: Ragnarök** for more details.)

Corrupt Creations: When Cethlenn uses her Create Animal boon to create worms or grubs, the resultant vermin can warp any normal animal of special significance to the Tuatha Dé Danaan who consume them, as described above.

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 5 (Crushing Grip, Divine Rampage, Holy Rampage, Knockback Attack, Uplifting Might), Epic Dexterity 3 (Escape Artist, Lightning Sprinter, Untouchable Opponent), Epic Stamina 7 (Body Armor, Damage Conversion, Devourer, Divine Damage Conversion, Holy Fortitude, Impenetrable, Inner Furnace, Internal Refinery, Regeneration, Self-Healing, Skin-Shedding), Epic Appearance 5 (Center of Attention, Compelling Presence, Dreadful Mein, Lasting Impression, My Eyes Are Up Here, Serpent's Gaze), Epic Wits 3 (Eternal Vigilance, Meditative Focus, Opening Gambit)

Mathean Template: See "The Mathean Template" sidebar, p. 41.

Spells: The Cailleach has all spells of a rating of seven dots or lower.

Join Battle: 10

Attacks:

Claws: Accuracy 11, Damage 11L, Parry DV 10, Speed 4

Clinch: Accuracy 11, Damage 7B, Parry DV —, Speed 6

The White Cracked Staff: Accuracy 12, Damage 14B, Parry DV 11, Speed 5

Soak: 7A/28L/32B, or 11A/36L/40B with the Body Armor and Impenetrable Knacks activated

Health Levels: –0 x45/Incap.

Dodge DV: 13, **Willpower:** 10

Legend: 8, **Legend Points:** 64

Other Notes: The Cailleach normally uses her Animal Feature Boon to gain a +1L/+3B soak, gaining the white, sloughing, rubbery skin of a worm. Through the Assumption of the Land Boon (part of the Enech Purview), the Cailleach has sensed the dinsenschas of several of the sites associated with her, most notably the Ceann na Cailleach, Mt. Ben Cruachan and the Strait of Corryvreckan.

Trophy: If killed, the Cailleach's possessions might be claimed by those who manage such a feat. Her white fur mantle acts to grant access to the Animal (Worms), Death and Sky Purviews, as well as adding +2 to bashing and lethal soaks (though it is not itself armor and can thus be worn with other pieces of armor). The White Cracked Staff grants access to the Earth and Frost Purviews and has the following traits: Accuracy +2, Damage +7B, Parry DV +3, Speed 5

Fomorians

The sons of Balor and Cethlenn, the fomorians are a great race born to a land covered with putrid mud and rotting flesh — the lands of Ireland following the Great Flood. These children of pestilence are warped and twisted, though incredibly strong. They all stand at least seven feet in height and are hideously ugly.

At least, most of them are monstrous in visage. Occasionally, fomorians may produce a child of shining beauty. Such children, referred to as "bright ones," are invariably the nobility of fomorians, leading their brethren in all things. They are usually quite clever and charming, and many lesser fomorians can't help but wish to do as they command.

Traits: Fomorians possess typical characteristics of the giant template, except that they always have Epic Appearance, with a focus on their hideous features. Their nobility, the so-called "bright ones", possess typical characteristics of the elder giant template, except that they always have Epic Appearance, with a focus instead on their otherworldly beauty. In all cases, fomorians always choose My Eyes Are Up Here as their first Appearance Knack, allowing them to effectively conceal their otherworldly nature for a time when they move among mortals.

Trophy: As per the giant or elder giant templates, as appropriate.

Crom Dubh

The father of the Fir Bolg is a terrible, broken creature. Dirt-brown skin, a mouth full of rotten, jagged teeth and black rheumy eyes sunk into a skull made of jagged protrusions, he looks like a tremendously tall, humpbacked old man. Of course, this belies the truly deadly strength and horror that is the Crook'd One, Crom Dubh.

In ancient days, Crom Dubh created the Fir Bolg by mixing his blood with the soil of the earth. He rolled the resultant mud into little balls and baked them in the fires under the earth until they cracked open like eggs. Thus, the first of the Fir Bolg was hatched. The Fir Bolg have always regarded their "little bent father" with respect and fondness, even though they no longer serve him.

Unfortunately, Crom Dubh does not see it the same way. He hates that they turned from worshiping him to the fair Tuatha, but he does not blame his wayward children. To him, they are simply creatures — little mud-toys, in fact — and they don't know any better. He reserves his fury for the Tuatha Dé Danaan and the aes sídhe, working against them where he may. Indeed, some legends of the aes sídhe tell that it was Crom Dubh who plucked bones of iron from his body and buried them beneath the earth, poisoning all earthly iron against the aes sídhe.

Creatures

Crom Dubh delights in doing to the Tuatha what the Tuatha did to him: stealing their children. Of all the avatars of Crom Cruach, Crom Dubh is the most likely to lure Scions away from service to the Tuatha. His first and foremost servant in the World is a Scion of Danu named Fodla. Fodla is a maternal woman, rounded at the hip and breast, who he won to his side because of her bitterness against her mother for abandoning her. Fodla believes that the Gods are negligent parents (at best) and knows that many Scions feel the way she does: cast aside, forgotten and alone. Quite skilled with Epic Manipulation, Fodla knows how best to find what it is that bothers Scions about their relationships with their divine parents, and she plays on those doubts. More than one Scion has been lured into her nets to suddenly find themselves working for Crom Cruach against the Tuatha Dé Danaan.

Crom Cruach also uses more than a few nemean creatures, particularly the underground and muck-dwelling types. Occasionally, he will also find a way to unleash such a creature from within Crom Cruach — the World is rarely ready to face off against an albino, nemean lizard.

MANIFESTATION OF ICHOR

PART TWO

Stuck in the dark woods with no sense of where to go next, Yukiko frowned and tried to suppress the rising frustration that threatened to overtake her good judgment. Tommy Li scurried down from the tree that he'd scaled, hanging upside-down for a moment from one of the branches by his feet before he flipped and landed neatly on the ground. Tommy jerked a thumb toward the narrow, bramble-strewn path that the group had followed for hours now.

"Only about another fifty feet," asserted Tommy. "There's a narrow bridge over the river there, and the castle is on the other side, just like the giant said."

Yukiko shook her head. "I hope we're approaching the end of this," she said. She stood and gently brushed the dirt from her traveling pants, when her stomach rumbled. Looking a bit embarrassed, she said, "Perhaps we should be quick about it."

Tommy slipped his sandals back on to his feet and spun his staff in a flourish. "No problem," he said and resumed a serious demeanor for a moment. He turned and, with exaggerated steps, continued along the roadway. After three paces, he let out a whoop and raced toward the bridge at the base of the forested hillside.

For a moment, Yukiko glanced behind her, wishing that Eric were here. The big lug would have simply plowed a path straight through this crazy forest and all of its riddling gnomes and poisonous lake-serpents, she thought. But at least I can enjoy the fresh air. It's a nice change of pace from the city.

As Yukiko reached the base of the hill, she spotted Tommy crouched at the near side of the bridge. In the middle of the bridge sat a woman draped in a long green gown, seated on a wooden stool, with a large harp in front of her. Her hands were on the strings of the harp, which Yukiko took to be a bad sign. The whole situation had an ominous vibe to it.

Suddenly the woman paused, her fingers hovering over the harp strings. Tommy Li glanced over his shoulder at Yukiko and crouched in an odd position, his staff contorted behind his back. The woman spoke.

"Welcome to the caer, travelers," the woman said in ringing tones. "As you have already braved the dark woods, you must know what comes next." She plucked at the harp strings, raising her voice in a high-pitched shriek that vibrated Yukiko's teeth and made Tommy's hair stand on end. Yukiko grimaced and dropped to one knee. She tried to raise the Kusanagi, but even as she lifted the sword, she felt blood pour from her nose as her head pounded. Her vision blurred, and she knew she couldn't register a good strike on the woman. Tommy had shoulder-rolled to one side and was clutching at his ears, trying in vain to block out the pain long enough to get his bearings; even his incredible sense of balance was knocked off-kilter by the blast of sound.

Another staccato noise ripped through the screaming, and the woman's voice ceased. Yukiko pushed herself up off her knees, looking around as tears streamed from her eyes. At the edge of the wood just behind her was Eric, up and about despite the beating he'd taken earlier. Next to Eric was a hard-bitten man in green military fatigues with a cocked cap and a submachine gun. The man jettisoned the clip from his H&K, reloaded and casually pulled a pair of earplugs from his ears.

Eric moved to help Yukiko to her feet. She staggered slightly but caught her balance and noticed that Tommy had already moved onto the bridge to examine the shattered remnants of the harp, as well as the conspicuous lack of a body.

"I thought you were supposed to be getting bed rest," Yukiko said to Eric as she tried to keep her balance with more grace than she felt. "You were…not entirely well."

Eric flashed a smile. "I was getting antsy just resting, so I headed out to pick up some food and made a new friend. I brought him along so we could settle this matter. Yukiko, meet Simon."

Yukiko nodded to the military man with a slight bow. "A pleasure," she said.

In response, Simon doffed his cap, replaced it on his head and took a cigar from one of his coat pockets. "Glad to be of service. No stranger a place than some I've been," he said with a quick glance at the landscape. "Raiding the castle? Rescuing the damsel?"

Tommy returned to the small group. "Something like that," he said, eyeing Simon warily. "Whose interests do you represent, anyway?"

Simon pulled the cigar from his mouth and took out a cutter from his other pocket. With a deft motion, he snipped the end, smiled at Tommy and said, "Free agent. Let's just say that your friend Eric here convinced me in the good name of patriotism—out of my respect for some dead presidents."

Tommy sniffed at the air, looking a bit puzzled. "He's not one of us," Tommy said to Yukiko and Eric. "Isn't this a bit much for a normal person?"

Yukiko and Eric glanced at one another, then at the ruined harp and the submachine gun. "Seems like he knows what he's doing to me," said Eric. "No time to argue anyway. We have to get inside the caer before the sun sets, and that's coming in just a few minutes. If it's dark when we're in the courtyard, the sun's gold will fade, the gates will shut and we'll be stuck in this dark wood at night. And I don't have to remind you of what waits in mythic dark woods at night."

Yukiko nodded at Eric's comment. "Right. No more wasting time. Let us go." She jogged across the bridge and started up the path toward the ruin. As the group followed suit, Yukiko overheard Tommy asking Simon, "How'd you think to bring earplugs on a job into another realm?"

The mercenary simply chuckled and replied, "Worked for Odysseus, didn't it?"

MANIFESTATION OF ICHOR

THE POWER OF CREATION

So you've decided to play **Scion**, but the power of a hero just isn't enough for your players. Your group wants to enter play as demigods or even as full-fledged Gods! What's a Storyteller to do? Instead of creating a hero character, spending some experience and adding the demigod tem-plate, you can simply use a set number of creation points so that you don't have to shuffle back and forth between several books and pages of math. Creating demigod and God-level characters, then, uses a slightly different set of creation points. The process is the same: follow those familiar steps in Chapter Two of **Scion: Hero**. The number of dots to spend, though, will be a bit different. Plus, you'll use a new system, introduced here, to flesh out some of your character's Fatebindings.

DIVINE FROM THE GET-GO

A new demigod character has presumably had a famous career as a Scion — otherwise, his Legend wouldn't be high enough to become a demigod — and has thus reached the pinnacle of mortal abilities. By the numbers, a starting character with a Legend rating of 4 need only spend 32 experience points (per the table on p. 207 of **Scion: Hero)** to increase his Legend rating and become a demigod. For the vast majority of heroes, though, the road isn't so straight; instead, they proceed from a low Legend score through many trials and tribulations until they arrive, at last, at demigodhood, with several separate increases in power along the way.

Similarly, a God could start as a hero and spend a couple hundred experience points to advance straight to Legend nine and become a full-fledged God. No God would ever survive such a process, though: Without the concomitant Epic Attributes, Knacks and Purviews, the potential God would probably be lunch for some erstwhile beastie.

When you determine your char-acter's Calling, you want to address the various stories that led up to your new demigod or God's Legend score. Assuming that you're part of a Band, your entire group can be involved in these stories. If you're feeling particularly gutsy, you could run them as a sort of prelude, but the whole point of making a starting demigod or God is to avoid going through scores of gaming sessions as a hero. Instead, flesh out each story as a single point of interest: what or who your Band overcame, what lessons they learned, and perhaps what they gained from it. These notes will provide your Storyteller with ideas for future antagonists. Try to create one story synopsis for each dot of Legend over 2 on your character. That way, you can have the story for how your Scion gained a Legend rating of 3, a story associated with Legend dot 4 and so on. Scions in your Band with lower Legend simply weren't around for some of the stories.

SPEND SOME DOTS

You know you want to: You're itching to spend some dots on your new demigod or God. The question is, how many dots do you spend?

You may notice that the number of dots listed here seems pretty low. In fact, you could build a character who's just like a starting hero with a demigod or God template added on! That's deliberate — you receive your real bonuses on the back end as a big chunk of additional bonus points.

THE STUFF OF LEGEND

Now for the tricky part. Rather than spending bonus points to gain a Legend rating, pick a Legend rating in conjunction with your Storyteller and determine your number of available bonus points based on that rating. The higher your character's Legend rating, the more bonus points you have available to spend; but you also have more potential enemies, Fatebindings and pitfalls that you have to face. The extra bonus points on this table supercede the usual 15 bonus points that you'd gain as a hero; don't take these bonus points and then tack on another 15. Everyone in the Band should have Legend ratings within two points of each other. Otherwise, the high-Legend characters are likely to dominate the game, while the low-Legend characters are left doing clean-up.

Choose your Legend rating *before* you spend your other points. That way, you can meet the various requirements for your Legend, as shown on the table.

Consult the accompanying table for Legend scores and their associated benefits and drawbacks.

Here's how to interpret these cryptic numbers.

Legend indicates the benefits and hindrances you have with that Legend rating as a starting score.

Bonus Points tells you how many bonus points you have to spend. This replaces the usual 15 bonus points for a hero character.

Fatebindings tells you how many permanent Fatebindings your character has. For a low-ranking demigod, you may only have Fatebindings to a few mortals. A high-powered God will have Fatebindings to scores of mortals and to other demigods and Gods

STARTING LEGEND BENEFITS

Legend	Bonus Points	Fatebindings	Requirements
5	25	1 mortal	—
6	36	3 mortals	—
7	49	5 mortals, 1 hero/titanspawn	1 Attribute 5+, 1 demigod Boon
8	64	10 mortals, 2 heroes/titanspawn	1 Attribute 5+, 2 demigod Boons
9	81	Many mortals, 5 heroes/titanspawn or 1 demigod	2 Attributes 5+, 3 demigod Boons
10	100	Many mortals, 10 heroes/titanspawn, 1 demigod	1 Attribute 6+, 2 other Attributes 5+, 1 God Boon, 3 demigod Boons
11	121	Many mortals and heroes/titanspawn, 3 demigods, 1 God	1 Attribute 7+, 2 other Attributes 6+, 2 God Boons, 5 demigod Boons
12	144	Many mortals and heroes/titanspawn, 5 demigods, 3 Gods	1 Attribute 8+, 2 other Attributes 6+, 3 God Boons, 7 demigod Boons

as well. See the Fatebindings section (pp. 50-51) to create these.

Requirements lists the Attributes and Boon ratings that you *must* purchase in order to have this level of Legend as a starting Scion. This means that some of your dots will be spoken for. If you don't purchase these ratings with your initial dots, you must spend bonus points to acquire them.

ATTRIBUTES

For Attributes, prioritize them as usual (primary, secondary and tertiary). For a demigod, spend ten dots into the primary category, eight into the secondary category and six into the tertiary category. Then, spend an extra three dots in any place that you want. Don't fret — you can always use bonus points to raise them further at a later date. As a demigod, your character's Attributes might rise above 5, but at this stage you may only increase one Attribute over 5. Also remember that if your character has an Attribute higher than 5, you must increase the character's Legend to match.

When spending for God Attributes, your primary, secondary and tertiary categories gain 12 dots, ten dots and eight dots, respectively. Then, spend an extra six dots in any place that you want. At this stage, you may increase up to three of your Attributes above 5, but remember as well that if you go up to the rarefied heights of 10 or more you'll need an associated Legend rating.

ABILITIES

Abilities are much simpler: Spend 30 dots among your various Abilities, as usual, with the same caveat that at least six of those dots spent into Favored Abilities. Since the demigod and God templates don't normally grant bonus Abilities, a freshly-created demigod or God doesn't get bonus Abilities, either (but you can use bonus points, later, to firm up some areas).

For now, be sure to obey the usual limitation that you can't raise an Ability above a score of 3 at the start.

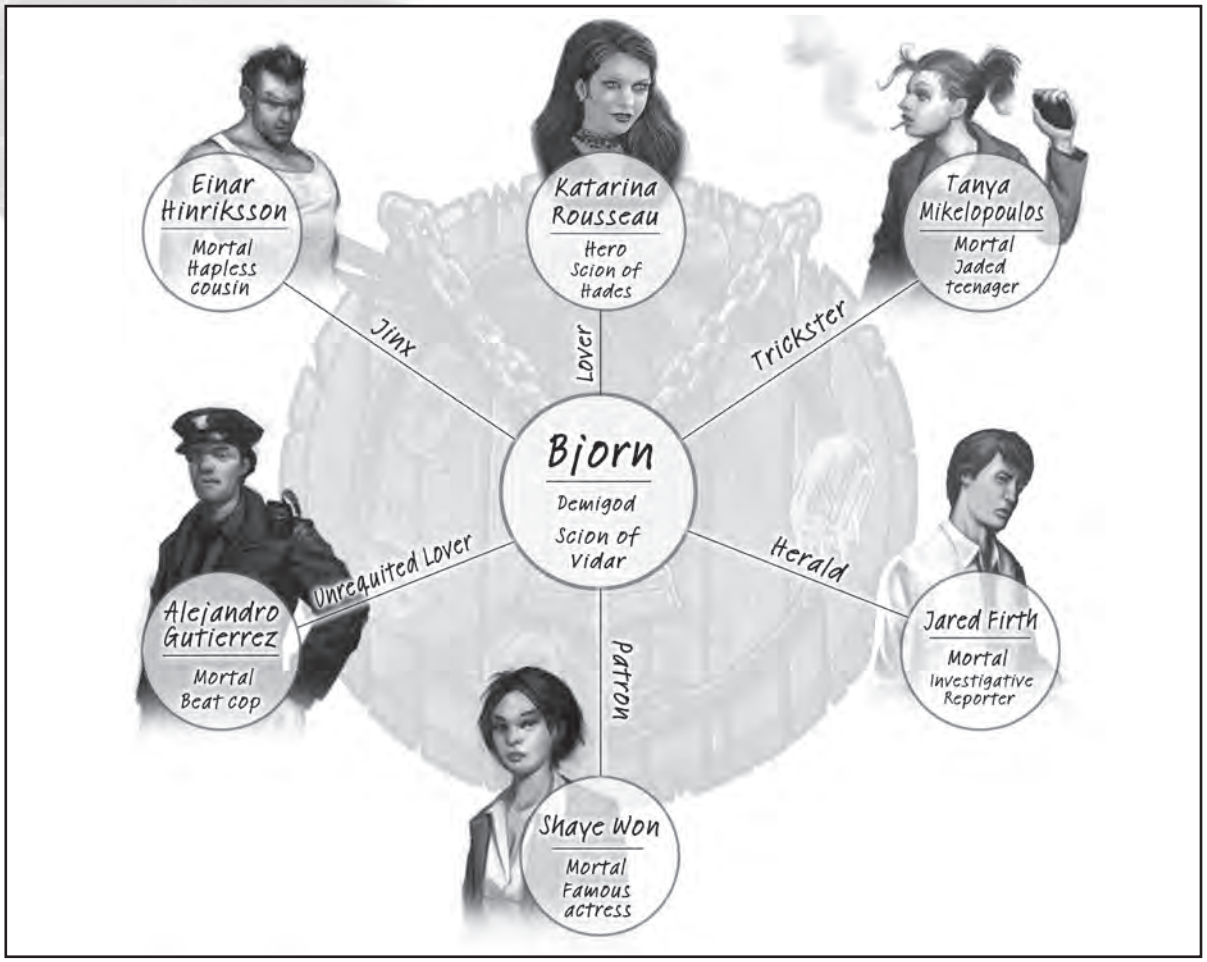
ADVANTAGES

Characters gain only a limited amount of Birthrights, showered upon them during Visitations. For that reason, demigods receive a fixed 10 dots for their Birthrights and Gods receive 15 dots for Birthrights. Similarly, a demigod gains 20 dots of Epic Knacks and Boons, while a God gains 30 dots, plus the usual free divine dot of Epic Strength, Epic Dexterity, Epic Stamina and Epic Appearance. Since demigods are limited to having one Attribute at a rating of 5 or more, and Gods are limited to having three Attributes at that level, there's a natural ceiling on their Epic Attributes as well. At this character creation stage, demigods can only choose demigod-level Boons from two Purviews, and Gods can only choose God-level Boons from two Purviews. At least one such Purview must be a Favored Purview. This helps to ensure that demigods and Gods have powers commensurate with their divine heritage and that some of their Purviews are still limited to lesser powers (which, presumably, they had as heroes).

VIRTUES

Choose Virtues as normal for a hero-level character (in **Scion: Hero**, p. 99); demigods and Gods who want higher Virtue ratings should spend bonus points on them. Demigods should have one Virtue at a rating of at least 4, and Gods should have one Virtue rating at 5. Keep this in mind when spending bonus points later (since starting Virtues generally don't go above 4 without bonus points).

Your Scion's Willpower is still the sum of her two highest Virtues.



BONUS POINTS

Finally, you get to spend all of those bonus points that you earned from your Legend pick earlier. See the table on p. 101 of **Scion: Hero** for a listing of ways to spend your bonus points.

NO FATE BUT WHAT WE MAKE

After spending all of those juicy, juicy bonus points, you must develop your character's existing Fatebindings. The Fatebindings provided by the table represent the minimum number of permanent bonds that the Scion has created so far over the course of her career via her actions, magic spells or other uses of Legend.

To determine the sorts of relationships your character has with Fatebindings, you may want to make a relationship chart (especially if your character has a Legend score of 6 or more). Draw a circle and write your Scion's name in the middle. Then draw a circle for each additional Fatebound person. Put Gods close to your character, demigods at the next ring out, heroes beyond that and mortals furthest of all. In each of those circles, write the name of the person. Connect it to your personal circle with a line. Over the line, write the Fatebound role that the person plays (found on pp. 223-225 of **Scion: Hero**). You don't necessarily need to flesh out each individual in entirety, but you and your Storyteller should at least agree on the basics, especially for those who may come up again, or those who already played a role in one of your previous Legend-defining stories.

When the table says "many," this has a special connotation. Instead of drawing a ring with lots of circles, just leave that circle off of your chart. The Storyteller can choose to introduce a person into a story and declare that the person has a Fatebinding to your character. The Storyteller should tell you this before the game starts, though, so that you at least know that your character will confront an old acquaintance again, and you can have some foreknowledge about the individual.

Example: *David's building a budding new demigod and chooses a Legend rating of 7 with the permission of his Storyteller. He takes a blank page, draws a circle in the center and writes down the name of his character, a Scion of Vidar named Bjorn. Consulting the table for Fatebindings, he notices that he should have five mortals and one hero or titanspawn bound to his character. David places a circle adjacent to Bjorn's, draws a line to Bjorn's circle and notes that it's a hero or titanspawn. He then moves outward slightly and places five more circles in a ring around the two central ones, each with a line connecting it to Bjorn. Since Bjorn's already a demigod, the Storyteller decides that the hero/titanspawn circle will be some sort of unresolved antagonist – someone that Bjorn turned into an enemy during his early adventures as a hero. After a bit of discussion, the two agree that it should be a hero from a different pantheon, and the Storyteller has David*

write down the name Katarina Rousseau. The Storyteller and David agree that she's a Lover, a Scion with whom Bjorn had a brief fling before moving on to greater things. David writes "Lover" over the line connecting Katarina's circle with Bjorn's. The Storyteller decides that she's a Scion of Hades, one of the rivals of Vidar, which will create some interesting tension next time she runs into Bjorn! They proceed to flesh out the mortal circles in a similar fashion.

NEW KNACKS

Whether hero, demigod or God, the phenomenal prowess of Epic Attributes often forms a solid basis to the more-than-human capabilities of a Scion. What mere mortals find difficult or impossible becomes routine and easy for a Scion with the right Epic Attributes. The Knacks that accompany such Epic Attributes are like the frosting on the cake, but some Scions prefer something a little different. These new Knacks represent some of the capabilities available to Scions that expand the current roster of powers, as well as showcasing a new direction inspired by the less well-represented pantheons.

When dealing with the vagaries of unspecific power elements, think conservatively. If a power doesn't grant the ability to do something, then the extra benefits shouldn't be assumed. A power with an unspecified duration typically lasts for a scene, unless its effects would wear off sooner when used. After all, ninjas don't get to fly just because the rulebook doesn't say that they can't... so take a similar tack in assuming that powers don't provide ancillary effects above and beyond their description, unless it suits the dramatic needs of your story.

EPIC STRENGTH

ARMOR CRUSHER

Prerequisite Knack: Holy Rampage **(Scion: Hero**, p. 126)

The raw power of the Scion's attacks now allows him not only to break through obstacles and walls, but to slam right through armor. The Scion simply channels his legendary might, then uses brute force to shatter enemy defenses and tear through shields, armored plates and vests with ease. While this Knack is active, the Scion's melee attacks all gain the Piercing quality. Activating this Knack costs five points of Legend. Its effects last for one scene.

ONE INCH PUNCH

Prerequisite Knack: Crushing Grip **(Scion: Hero**, p. 126)

Extrapolated from learning to exert tremendous pressure from all manner of holds and contortions, the Scion develops the ability to put her massive strength to good use on a single, small point. With just a flick of a finger, a jab of an elbow or a headbutt, the Scion delivers the entire force oft her Epic Strength. Although this doesn't necessarily change the Scion's unarmed combat style — she still needs to land a strike

on an enemy — it's quite intimidating when she can simply poke a building and cause an entire wall to crumble. Similarly, if the Scion is somehow restrained but able to move even a miniscule part of her body, she could (for instance) flick a tiny rock with her toe with enough force to kill a man. While this does not increase the Scion's damage output, it means that even when bound or restricted from moving in some way, the Scion can still bring all of her Epic Strength to bear in an attack. Perhaps she's chained with bindings made from Gleipnir and can't break them, but she can head-butt her assailant. Maybe she is buried in rock and can only move her little finger but can use that to send the boulder on the top of the heap flying. Her damage output and ability to lift are not impinged in any way when she's forced to rely only on a single limb, a part of her body or a restricted range of motion. Activating this Knack costs three points of Legend. Its effects last for a single application.

TITANIUM TOOLS

While Relics may be made of stern stuff, the usual off-the-shelf "authentic katana" tends to fold like the cheap steel that it is when it connects with something under the force of Epic Strength. With this Knack, any tool or item that the Scion picks up benefits from the same bends and loopholes in the laws of physics that allow Epic Strength to defy both leverage and structural integrity. The Scion could use a wooden board to clobber a thug, or he could ram a flimsy iron fireplace poker right through a wall of concrete with the full force of his Epic Strength. In either case, the tool would remain reasonably intact (albeit with some cosmetic wear). Such guarantees are particularly handy when using an object of questionable strength to beat a titanspawn to death without destroying the item in question (such as a snow globe intended as a present).

Note that Titanum Tools doesn't improve the Hardness or rigidity of an item. A cheap katana can still be snapped in half by an angry titanspawn that decides to target the blade. A limp spaghetti noodle is no better a weapon with this Knack than without. Titanium Tools simply allows the Scion to use objects that might be feasible as weapons under normal circumstances and subject them to the extraordinary effects of his Epic Strength without breaking them, for as long as he wields the object.

EPIC DEXTERITY

MICROSCOPIC PRECISION

Typically, a Scion can't manipulate what he can't see or feel. No matter how much Epic Dexterity she has, a Scion just won't be able to touch-solder a microchip when she can't even see the nanoscale connectors. With Microscopic Precision, the Scion's ability to control fine manipulation becomes so highly attenuated that she can manipulate materials on an absurdly small scale. Armed with nothing more than a pair of tweezers and her own tremendously controlled digits, the Scion can separate dust particles, tweeze out bacteria by hand with a microscope or pluck a tiny corrupting titanspawn hair from a wound, all without disturbing anything around the item. Similarly, the Scion can disable an alarm or a bomb just by teasing out the wires by hand, separate out the threads of the Golden Fleece with her fingers and never lose at the game of Operation.

Of course, Microscopic Precision does not equal microscopic vision, so the Scion must still have some way to see what she's manipulating. Equipped with such a tool — or with an Epic Perception Knack of the appropriate sort — she can perform microscale maneuvers more adroitly than the most advanced surgical apparatus. Such precision requires a good deal of concentration, but if she's willing to use the usual rules for multiple actions, the Scion can try to manipulate a tiny object with precision while defending herself, running or performing some other ridiculous action. Activating this Knack costs one point of Legend. Its effects last for one scene.

OMNIDEXTERITY

The Scion functionally has "two right hands". The Scion can use either hand with equal facility and also suffers no penalties when trying to manipulate an object with his tongue or his toes; even while using some other contorted body part, the Scion suffers only half the usual penalties (rounded down) for the awkwardness of the situation. While the Scion still can't perform something physically impossible (there's no way to fit his calf muscle through the trigger guard of a pistol to fire it, for instance), just about any amount of wiggle room is sufficient for the Scion to manipulate objects in surprising ways. The Scion could hang from a tree branch by his toes (perhaps in emulation of Sun Wukong) or could use his tongue to hold a pair of probes and thereby pick a lock. If the Scion manages to gain new and different natural appendages, say by assuming the form of an octopus via the Animal Purview, then his new appendages also benefit from Omnidexterity. Artificial "appendages," such as a chain or a ruler with a sticky piece of tape on the end, do not gain this benefit, although the Scion could certainly wield such a tool via his hand, foot, mouth or stranger combination of limbs.

SHOT TO THE HEART

Prerequisite Knack: Trick Shooter **(Scion: Hero**, p. 128)

When fighting against fearsome titanspawn with armored hides, scaly skin or chitinous shells, sometimes a Scion has to aim for a very precise spot. Indeed, it was just such a weak spot that was the downfall of Achilles. Naturally, that sort of precision can be hard

to achieve in the heat of battle, especially against a target with a supernaturally impressive defense. With the steady aim provided by Shot to the Heart, though, a Scion never needs to worry about hitting a small patch of exposed flesh, a vulnerable tendon or an eye between blinks — his attacks excel at finding the weak point. While Shot to the Heart is active, the Scion reduces any penalty for attacking a specific weak point by an amount up to his Epic Dexterity score. That is, if a giant turtle-like titanspawn has a weak spot in its soft underbelly, but striking the unarmored area has a difficulty of 5 and the attacking Scion has an Epic Dexterity of 3, then the Scion reduces the difficulty of making such a targeted shot to difficulty 2. Shot to the Heart can't reduce the added difficulty of a targeted shot to less than zero — making an attack on a vital spot is never *easier* than just hitting the damn thing. Also, Shot to the Heart doesn't give the Scion any innate knowledge of *where* a vital spot might be; it just lets him target the spot more effectively if he knows where to find one.

While Shot to the Heart requires a Knack typically used with ranged combat as a prerequisite, this Knack can be used with any of the Scion's attacks. Activating this Knack costs three points of Legend. Its effects last for one scene.

EPIC STAMINA

INVULNERABLE NAIL

Prerequisite Knack: Body Armor (**Scion: Demigod**, pp. 57-58)

By concentrating all of his phenomenal stamina on a single point of his body, the Scion can make a tiny area nigh-invulnerable. For a second, the Scion's ichor seeps into that small point no larger than a fingernail, and that part of the Scion's body becomes tremendously difficult to damage. The area affected gains a Hardness rating (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 201) equal to the Scion's Epic Stamina. Any attack with fewer damage dice than the Hardness rating simply bounces off with no effect, while an attack with more damage dice loses a number of dice equal to the Hardness rating before the Scion attempts to soak it (as a special extension of Hardness, which normally only applies to inanimate objects).

The real trick lies in positioning this tiny, invulnerable spot to absorb an attack. Normally, a Scion uses his Parry DV to deflect attacks in this fashion. Since the Scion has the Body Armor Knack as a prerequisite, he can already Parry melee attacks. Instead, Invulnerable Nail provides the Scion with a defense against an attack that he can see coming but can't parry, such as when he's held in place by a titanspawn's tentacle and needs to make his forehead momentarily impenetrable to the oncoming needle-tipped appendage that will try to suck out his brain. In such a case, the Scion keeps his full unarmed Parry DV because he can try to deflect the attack at the last moment by anticipating where it will strike and fortifying that part of his body. Similarly, a clever Scion might feign suicide by attacking himself with a mundane weapon and deflecting it at the last minute through the use of this Knack. Activating this Knack costs two points of Legend. It is a reflexive action done in response to an attack.

RAGING BULL

Like the eponymous boxer who just becomes more dangerous after taking a few punches, the Scion turns into a devastating fighting machine once she's wounded. Her body releases adrenalin and more exotic substances, firing her up to greater heights of fury. With this Knack active, the Scion gains *bonuses* from her wounds instead of penalties. Thus, if she's filled in the first four boxes of her health levels, the Scion gains a +2 bonus on all of her appropriate rolls instead of taking the normal -2 penalty. Even if her Epic Stamina would obviate the penalty in whole or in part, she still gains the full bonus. Scions whose Epic Stamina grants them additional health levels count those boxes as having a -4 penalty (and thus a +4 bonus for purposes of this Knack).

Furthermore, every time a Scion using Raging Bull suffers an injury (be it a single level of bashing damage or ten levels of aggravated damage), the player may choose to spend one point of Legend to restore one expended point of Willpower. Activating this Knack costs three points of Legend. Its effects last for one scene.

UNDER PRESSURE

Although the Water Purview can provide protection against the deep pressure of the ocean, and the Earth purview can likewise defend against the crushing weight of being buried, some Scions just don't have the luxury of branching out into multiple Purviews like that — or, worse still, find themselves in the awkward position of being stuck in a Titan's gullet, a hyperbaric chamber or an otherworldly place of super-thick atmosphere. Fortunately, a Scion with this Knack need not fear the punishment of changes in pressure or atmosphere. While the Scion must still breathe, she doesn't have to worry about the bends, explosive decompression or the crushing force of a deep undersea trench. Her body naturally and instinctively adjusts to account for all changes in pressure.

Under Pressure can't protect a Scion against bruising and crushing damage: If she's stuck in the aforementioned Titanic gullet, she'll have to use other abilities to deal with the digestive action and the acid. She won't, however, have to worry about suddenly being crushed when submerged deep in that same pool of stomach acid.

EPIC CHARISMA

BLAME JAMES

Prerequisite Knack: Boys Will Be Boys (**Scion: God**, p. 68)

Some Scions are just too likable to take the heat. When the Scion invokes Boys Will Be Boys in order to calm the anger of an authority figure after a disaster, the player can choose to spend two additional Legend points and invoke Blame James as well. Then, the Scion just glances at someone else, makes a brief comment about "Well, it wasn't *my* idea..." or somehow gives the impression that the narrowly-averted trouble was the result of someone else's malfeasance. So impressive is the Scion's demeanor that the disciplinary authority figure becomes convinced that the named individual had *something* to do with the event, and is in *some* way culpable. This Knack only functions if the use of Boys Will Be Boys also functioned; if that attempt fails, then this Knack also fails, although the Legend points are still spent.

INSTANT SEMINAR

Prerequisite Knack: Inspirational Figure (**Scion: Hero**, p. 130)

The Scion expands his ability to influence groups of people by making any topic, no matter how convoluted or mundane, seem interesting, gripping and of crucial importance. The Scion must spend at least a minute lecturing to a crowd on a particular topic. The Scion's player then spends two points of Legend and rolls (Charisma + Presence + Legend). For each success scored, one person in the crowd gains temporary use of a Scion's Ability score. The Scion can perform this quick instruction for any one Ability, but everyone in the crowd hears the same speech and therefore can potentially benefit from the same Ability. For the rest of the scene, those affected by this power may choose to use the Scion's Ability in place of their own.

Heroes can only allow a beneficiary to gain a maximum of three temporary dots in an Ability this way. Demigods can grant up to four dots, while Gods can grant up to five. Such a trick is very useful for turning a disorganized mob into deadly streetfighters (Brawl), creating a temporary squad of EMTs to deal with a disaster (Medicine) or getting the help of a group of inexperienced people in a large construction project, like the pyramids (Craft). Using this Knack does not in any way lower or use up the invoking Scion's own Ability.

The Scion can use this Knack only once per scene.

PARAGON OF VIRTUE

Prerequisite Knack: Inspirational Figure (**Scion: Hero**, p. 130)

The Scion spends a minute giving a brief inspirational speech, then charges ahead into the fray (be it fighting titanspawn or heading to the lab to find a last-ditch cure for a Titan-created plague). The Scion's player spends two points of Legend and rolls (Charisma + Command + Legend). For each success scored, one person in the crowd becomes fired up with the Scion's Virtue. The mortal listener gains one dot in a Virtue that the Scion possesses — whichever one the provided speech was about. This can lead mortals into all the benefits and pitfalls of having a Virtue rating. Every listener gains the same Virtue. A Scion could choose to give a Virtue that won't have any direct benefit on an upcoming action, if they so desire.

The Scion can use this Knack only once per scene.

EPIC MANIPULATION

DEPROGRAMMING

Prerequisite Knack: Takes One to Know One (**Scion: Hero**, p. 132); possibly others (see text)

Usually, mortals and even other Scions who've been influenced by Epic Charisma or Epic Manipulation go about their business blissfully unaware that they've been duped. With a few well-chosen words to reinforce the subject's awareness of the situation, though, a Scion with this Knack can help people snap out of the unnatural influence of others. The player spends Legend equal to the cost of the power being countered plus one (plus an additional three Legend for every point of Willpower spent on the power being countered), then rolls (Manipulation + Presence + Legend). If the player rolls more successes than the original command, the subject immediately snaps out of it and realizes that he didn't want to do whatever it is that he was compelled to do. If the original power didn't require a roll to succeed (like Overt Order), then the Scion's player must simply score a number of successes equal to the original commander's (Manipulation + Command + Legend).

In order to countermand a specific Epic Charisma or Epic Manipulation Knack, the Scion using Deprogramming must also know the Knack being used. That is, using Deprogramming to stop Overt Order requires that the Scion performing the countermand must also know Overt Order. Using this Knack in combat can be tricky: Typically, the Scion will want to wait (perhaps taking a Guard action) and then interrupt when needed.

NOT THE FACE

The Scion makes a simple wince, throws up his hands, shrieks for mercy or somehow shows that he's just not quite ready to take an incoming blow. As a result, the attacker hesitates for the briefest instant, perhaps long enough for the Scion to escape or for a friend of his to land a telling blow instead. As a response to an incoming attack, the Scion's player spends one point of Legend and rolls (Manipulation + Empathy + Legend) against the opponent's (Willpower + Integrity + Legend). If the player wins,

then the attacker hesitates for the barest instant, and his attack delays to the next tick. Naturally, the attacker must be able to see the Scion in order for this trick to work, and the Scion must know that the attack is coming, as well. The Scion can use this Knack only once per scene.

RETURN TO SENDER

Prerequisite Knack: Overt Order (**Scion: Hero**, pp. 131-132)

Sometimes, when you send a minion off to do your bidding, you want that minion to come back for more work. At the very least, you want to know if the minion was killed in the attempt. With Return to Sender, the Scion prompts someone to return immediately to her after performing a task delegated with Epic Manipulation. The player spends an additional point of Legend to activate this power when using any other Epic Manipulation Knack to force a subject to take an action. Immediately after performing the order, the commanded subject will attempt to return to the Scion by the most convenient means possible, although not at the expense of his own safety. If the initial command fails, then Return to Sender has no effect, but the Legend point is still expended.

EPIC APPEARANCE

DO NOT WANT

Prerequisite Knack: Dreadful Mien (**Scion: Hero**, p. 133)

The rotting flesh, slimy tentacles, flayed skin and protruding bones of various Gods are the divine way of saying "Don't touch." Scions who truly exercise their creepiness become so repulsive that their enemies don't want to touch them or even look at them, even in battle. (People this ugly rarely have friends, anyway). To activate Do Not Want, the Scion's player expends three Legend points, then rolls (Appearance + Presence + Legend). Whenever someone first tries to attack or lay hands on the Scion, the aggressor's player must roll (Willpower + Integrity + Legend). If the attacker scores more successes than the Scion's player, his character's actions proceed as normal. If he scores fewer successes than the Scion, then the difference becomes a bonus to the Scion's DV against the attacker. This bonus persists for the rest of the scene. For example, if the Scion's player scores 6 successes on the (Appearance + Presence + Legend) roll and an attacker only manages to eke out 3 successes on his (Willpower + Integrity + Legend) roll, then the Scion gains a +3 bonus to DV against that attacker for the rest of the scene. This benefit applies against everyone who tries to take action against the Scion for the rest of the scene, though each attacker makes a separate resistance roll. (For the sake of sanity, the Storyteller might wish to roll once and apply a blanket penalty for large groups of extras.)

Scions whose Epic Appearance represents divine beauty cannot use this Knack. Also, it doesn't work on ugly Scions with more dots of Epic Appearance than the one using the Knack.

MEET ME BACKSTAGE

Prerequisite Knack: Come Hither (**Scion: Hero**, p. 133)

Better than simply drawing someone to his side, a Scion with this Knack can give a meaningful glance, a casual wave or a whispered hint and cause a subject to go somewhere at the Scion's discretion. The star-struck victim tries to move to a nearby room, balcony, Jacuzzi or other spot as instructed, in hopes that the Scion will

soon arrive. The power of the Knack does all of the convincing. The Scion's player simply spends one Legend point and picks a single recipient, as with the Come Hither Knack. As usual, the intended recipient must be able to see an image of the Scion, must understand that the message is for her and must have a reasonable idea of how to find him.

Meet Me Backstage doesn't interrupt a subject's self-preservation any more than Come Hither does: While the subject makes all due haste to reach the appointed meeting place, "due haste" doesn't mean "die along the way." Nevertheless, this Knack is excellent for discreet rendezvous as well as setting up a poor sap for a beat-down party.

Scions whose Epic Appearance represents divine ugliness cannot use this Knack. Also, it doesn't work on beautiful Scions with more dots of Epic Appearance than the one using the Knack.

VISAGE GREAT AND TERRIBLE

Scions of Hel are almost always awesomely hideous, while Scions of Aphrodite are generally phenomenally attractive. With this Knack, though, a Scion can have the best of both worlds. Once a Scion chooses this Knack, she can shift her Epic Appearance from hideous to beautiful at will. The player simply expends the requisite Legend cost and the Scion's mien transforms. In either form, she is still recognizable as herself; she cannot use this Knack to change her appearance, unless she also has a Knack like Detail Variation from p. 71 of **Scion: God**. However, she can change from an elegant, refined woman to a vengeful, nerve-wracking hag in the blink of an eye. Once she transforms thusly, her range of available Epic Appearance Knacks shifts as appropriate. While beautiful, then, the Scion can invoke all of her known Epic Appearance Knacks that rely on great beauty; while hideous, she can invoke any of her Epic Appearance Knacks that require a monstrous countenance.

Once a Scion learns this Knack, she can freely purchase any Epic Appearance Knack that would normally require incredible beauty or incredible monstrosity. She can only use the Knacks appropriate to the form that she currently bears, though.

Activating this Knack costs three points of Legend. The Scion remains in her switched state until she decides to activate the Knack again. (Indeed, both of them are her "natural" state; she simply has the ability to swap between them as desired.)

EPIC PERCEPTION

IN YOUR DREAMS

Prerequisite Knack: Subliminal Warning (**Scion: Hero**, p. 134)

Even the best senses are of no use to a Scion who's asleep. While some Scions get around this by developing enough Epic Stamina to no longer *need* sleep, other Scions prefer a different approach — one that also has the advantage of working while unconscious, regardless of whether it's sleep-induced or trauma-induced. As the Scion slips into a comatose state, she leaves a bit of her mind attuned to her godly senses, and her subconscious mind remains aware of what goes on around her while she is out cold.

With In Your Dreams, the Scion generally doesn't see anything (since most people don't sleep with their eyes open), but she retains everything that she hears, feels, tastes and smells while asleep. When she awakens, she can access her memories of all that happened around her, just as if she had been lying there feigning slumber. This is greatly enhanced if she also has the Perfect Memory Epic Intelligence Knack (**Scion: Hero**, pp. 135-136).

Activating this Knack costs one point of Legend. Its effects last as long as the Scion remains asleep or unconscious. The player can activate this Knack as a reflexive action if some power or injury renders the Scion comatose.

REAL MCCOY

The Scion's keen senses allow him to determine when he's dealing with a creature that has been shapeshifted or a being that has chosen to take on a different form. By spending one point of Legend, the player enables the Scion to discern when any creature that he can sense is actually in a form that is not its default shape. This could be due to a Scion using the Animal Purview to assume an animal form or perhaps the result of a spell, like Circe's transformative powers (presented in **Scion: Demigod**, pp. 237-8). The Scion doesn't necessarily know what the creature's normal form should be, just that it's been changed somehow into something different. Of note is the fact that this Knack doesn't detect illusions: It only determines when a person or creature has physically transformed into something else.

SCENT THE DIVINE

Most Scions seem to stumble into Bands or find themselves guided into collaboration by their divine parents. A rare few, though, have the ability to smell (and sometimes hear) the very ichor that flows in the veins of other Scions. With just a sniff of the air, the Scion catches the signature scent that wafts off any Scion, marking the subject as more than mortal. The Scion automatically knows when she scents another Scion, be it hero, demigod or God. Indeed, her refined sense may even divulge the pantheon from which the other Scion hails, in the form of a specific flavor or memory that comes with the smell. Sometimes the triggered memory even brings with it the phantom sound of a particular music or tone.

If a subject uses a Boon or Knack to conceal his identity or whereabouts, the sniffing Scion must first be able to locate the target. If she isn't aware of the

I CAN SENSE YOU, HIGHLANDER

At the Storyteller's option, you might want to give *all* Scions the Scent the Divine Knack for free and let it be activated at all times. That way, Scions can always tell when they meet other Scions. There's no fooling someone by hiding in a crowd or pretending to be mortal — blood calls to blood, and ichor calls to ichor. This is a good way to make sure that the Band gets together even if their divine parentage doesn't help out, but it also provides them with the drawback that they'll always be spotted by their enemies well in advance.

other Scion's presence, then the sniffer won't smell anything. This power doesn't tell her that another Scion is lurking about somewhere, only that someone she's spotted *is* a Scion.

Scions in general do not have individual, personalized scents of ichor, although at the Storyteller's discretion a God might be so powerful that his ichor is unique and distinct. Instead, a Scion's scent depends upon his parentage. Further, even though a Scion with this Knack might catch the scent of a particular pantheon, she might not recognize what it is until she's managed to encounter enough other Scions from said pantheon. If you have created other pantheons for use in your game, you'll want to decide on their scents as well.

Note also that titanspawn do not have a signature scent that is discernable with this Knack. Activating this Knack costs one point of Legend.

EPIC INTELLIGENCE

AXIOM

After running into ambushes featuring no less than two dozen animated sand-golems with stone hearts, a Scion begins to wonder if there's some sort of pattern behind the attacks. The logical mind of a Scion with Epic Intelligence puts those patterns together and determines some viable conclusion. Once the sand-golems have been defeated, for instance, the Scion might theorize that since they are all made from sand, their creator must reside somewhere with a surfeit of sand — some desert. Normal people create theories like this all the time, but Scions with this Knack create theories that are *correct*.

The Scion's player spends three points of Legend and rolls (Intelligence + appropriate Ability + Legend). The Ability used will depend upon the axiom in question: Deriving a scientific fact about something uses Science, while relying on observed clues to deduce a suspect uses Investigation. The Scion must then state the axiom clearly, such as "I deduce from the presence of so much sand in these golems that the creator must reside within a desert," or "The constant attacks by ninja imply that our enemy must be related somehow to the Amatsukami." If the player's roll succeeds, the Storyteller will respond with "true," meaning that the Scion's claim is known to be true; "false," meaning that the claim is known to be false; or "incorrect," meaning that the Scion has proceeded from a false assumption (perhaps forgetting that the ambushing ninja were all clones of Jean-Claude van Damme).

If the Storyteller had already planned out that element of the adventure, then the player learns what the Storyteller had in mind by virtue of the power; if the Storyteller had left the element undecided, then his answer to the player's Axiom essentially enforces how that part of the story will unfold. The Scion logically knows exactly what to expect, and she knows

PANTHEON	SCENT AND POSSIBLE SOUND
Aesir	Burning amber, with a snap of electricity
Amatsukami	Cherry blossoms, with a roaring wave
Atlantis	Ice, with no sound
Atzlánti	Fresh blood, accompanied by the sound of a heartbeat
Celestial Bureaucracy	Ink and old paper, with a sound of rustling silk
Devas	Incense, with a low humming
Dodekatheon	Olives in hot air, with a murmuring crowd
Loa	Rum and tobacco, with a drumbeat
Pesedjet	Dry dust and sand, with a sound of wind
Tuatha Dé Dannan	Fresh grass and clover, with a sound of creaking wood

immediately if her best guess is right, wrong, or founded on a mistake that she made.

The difficulty of the roll depends upon the scope of the statement. Nailing down a simple fact, such as "All of these attackers use cheap guns, so their boss must be poor," has a low difficulty (1-5). Nailing down a more wide-ranging fact, such as "Despite their varied forms, all of these titanspawn are all susceptible to silver, so we should prepare to use the powers of the Moon against them," has a moderate difficulty (6-15). Facts that affect the Overworld or Underworld, or that nail down specifics with exacting detail, are severely difficult (25+). The difference between a normal deduction and a fact nailed down with Axiom is that the Scion's stated fact (if confirmed by the Storyteller) is known to be right. Essentially, the Scion's player states something that will be true or will be false about the rest of the story. The Scion can use this Knack only once per scene.

CONCEPT TO EXECUTION

Prerequisite Knacks: Fast Learner (**Scion: Hero**, p. 135), Star Pupil (**Scion: Demigod**, p. 65)

Ancient Gods with a particular joy for creation, such as Ptah and Hephaestus, often delight in unleashing strange scientific devices on an unsuspecting populace (or Scion). Scions who turn their prodigious intellect to the construction of curiosities often try to find ways to make useful tools, entertaining toys or devious traps. All three are possible for the mind capable of taking an idea from concept to execution. With Epic Intelligence and the Craft and Science Abilities, a Scion can manufacture a wide range of items, but this Knack enables the Scion to build uncanny devices that defy conventional reason or function.

Gadgets created by Scions have three primary possible functions:

Replace another item's function: For instance, creating a quick repair for a broken carburetor, using an aluminum can and a bicycle tube. Such a fix can temporarily restore function to a "mundane" (non-magical) item, such as a car, a computer or an orbital shuttle.

Temporarily replace a Relic: The Scion can use his innate knowledge of design and creation to make an object that can substitute for a missing or damaged Relic. The replacement allows its wielder to access one Purview that the original missing or damaged Relic normally provided. Replacement Relics require the creating Scion to imbue the item with a bit of ichor as power, which means suffering a level of lethal damage (with no soak) in order to bleed out some ichor to fuel the item.

Perform a specialized new function: The Scion creates a device with functions not found among the more "common" tools of the World. The Golden Servant of Hephaestus (**Scion: Demigod**, pp. 228-229) would be an example of this.

As a general principle, items that replace another item's function or temporarily replace a Relic are temporary. The Scion's player spends five points of Legend and rolls (Intelligence + Craft + Legend). The difficulty depends upon the object, as shown in the accompanying table. This is an extended task of the Miscellaneous type, so it can be done in the midst of combat as the Scion theorizes, tears apart available materials and comes up with a solution on the fly. The temporary component functions for one use or (if the crafting Scion's player spends a point of Willpower) for the rest of the scene.

SUGGESTED ITEM CREATION DIFFICULTY MODIFIERS

Size Modifier	
	Item is larger than a breadbox or smaller than a car key: +3
	Item is larger than a person or smaller than a thumbtack: +5
	Item is larger than a car or smaller than a grain of rice: +10
	Item is larger than a battleship or microscopic: +15
Complexity Modifier	
	Item has many moving parts: +3
	Item has many *intricate* moving parts: +5
	Item uses electricity: +10
	Item uses microcircuitry: +15
Dramatic Modifier	
	Item has only a peripheral relation to the story: +3
	Item has no relation to the story: +5
	Item runs counter to part of story, theme or plot: +10

Specialized new items rely on the Scion exploiting (or writing) new scientific principles. Creation of such devices can take months or years of time; the extended test uses (Intelligence + Science + Legend) to theorize the item, then (Intelligence + Craft + Legend) to build it. The difficulty for such a task typically begins at 35, and can increase due to object size and complexity (as well as how relevant it is to the story at hand; see the sidebar for some suggestions). If the item performs some otherwise impossible task or would radically change day-to-day life for the common man — cheap, clean fusion power, flying cars starting at $100, an algorithm that proves that P = NP — the base difficulty ranges from 50 to 100, and the task can only be completed by a God.

Thanks to the interference of Fate, any object that would completely hamstring a dramatic moment or reshape the cosmic order is simply beyond the magnitude of capabilities for even a God with this Knack. Also, the Scion must have some sort of tools or materials to work with. Trapped in the Mojave, the Scion can't make a moisture condenser out of sand, but in a junkyard, the Scion could construct a miniature tank.

TACTICAL PLANNING

Usually, personal combat relies heavily on quick thinking and razor-sharp timing. A Scion with the Tactical Planning Knack, though, thinks three moves ahead of everyone else on the battlefield. With her excellent command of the battle situation and her prepared contingency plans, she's able to react by using a previously-developed script instead of falling back on reflexes. As long as she isn't surprised, the Scion can choose to substitute her Intelligence score (including Epic Intelligence) for her Wits when making Join Battle rolls.

EPIC WITS

ADAPTIVE FIGHTING

By registering how an opponent defends, the Scion gains insight into how to launch a successful attack. The Scion's Epic Wits allow him to adjust his offense immediately after failing to touch an enemy. After missing an opponent with an attack, the Scion's player spends one point of Legend. On the Scion's next attack against that same opponent, the player adds his character's Epic Wits as extra dice on the attack roll, to a maximum of +3. For demigods, the player may spend two points of Legend to increase the bonus to a maximum of +6, and for Gods, the player may spend three points of Legend to increase the bonus to the character's full Epic Wits rating with no maximum. If this attack misses or if the Scion chooses not to attack again, then the bonus is lost.

BETWEEN THE TICKS

Prerequisite Knack: Opening Gambit (**Scion: Hero**, p. 136)

Instead of finishing an action with panache or waiting for the right moment in a battle, the Scion *makes* the right moment. Normally, a Scion can't interrupt any action but Aim and Guard. With this Knack, the Scion instead executes a perfectly-timed maneuver with split-second reactions and moves on to her next trick. The Scion's player can activate this Knack at a cost of three Legend points to interrupt after any action, effectively letting the Scion take another action before the requisite number of ticks have passed. The Scion can use this Knack only once per scene.

DON'T READ THE MANUAL

The Scion sizes up a single item and then puts together an intuitive judgment of how to use it. No matter how complex the item, the Scion can grasp at least the rudiments of its functions. After spending a single point of Legend, the Scion can use the item for the rest of the scene as if the character had one dot in the appropriate Ability. The Scion could, for instance, glance at the controls of a stealth bomber, then intuitively figure out how to get it off the ground (or land it) as if she had one dot in the Control (Jet Aircraft) Ability. Similarly, a noncombatant could pick up a weapon and fight with it as if she had one dot of the Melee Ability. This Knack has no effect if the Scion already possesses the requisite skill.

NEW BIRTHRIGHTS

The Creatures, Followers, Guides and Relics provided in this section provides some new ideas that you can spin to create your own additions to your story. Rather than just putting down some more monsters with statistics, these samples each hinge on a particular idea that may be divergent from the usual core **Scion** game, and so they let you introduce a few twists to the regular cast of critters and magic items that populate the World (and places beyond).

NEW CREATURES

KERIT (CREATURE •••)

At home in eastern Africa, the kerit looks at first glance like a strangely-stooped small bear. With brown fur and a shambling gait, it seems to be little more than another nighttime omnivore, right up until it leaps over a fence, grabs a screaming victim in its front paws and proceeds to run on its remaining four back

legs before it clambers up a large tree to feast on the victim's head.

Since the kerit is a nocturnal beast with dark fur and a certain amount of animal cunning, it is rarely seen by hunters or safari-goers. Nevertheless, people living in the rural bush of Africa continue to relate stories of the kerit, of its tendency to sit on thick tree-branches and lean down to lop off the tops of travelers' heads, and of its ability to sneak into pens and steal away herd animals. The kerit is slightly smaller than a brown bear, perhaps weighing in at 1,000 to 2,000 pounds, but it makes up for this smaller mass with its startling speed and agility (in part because it has six legs).

For a Scion, the kerit is an appropriate companion for the Loa and Pesedjet pantheons. The kerit is most common as a pet for Scions associated with the Darkness purview.

Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 3, Stamina 6; Charisma 0, Manipulation 0, Appearance 2; Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Virtues: Harmony 3, Order 2, Piety 2, Vengeance 3

Abilities: Athletics 4, Awareness 2, Brawl 3, Fortitude 2, Integrity 2, Presence 1, Stealth 4, Survival 4

Supernatural Powers:

Epic Attributes: Epic Dexterity 1 (Monkey Climber)

Join Battle: 5

Attacks:

Bite: Accuracy 7, Damage 7L, Parry DV —, Speed 4

Claw: Accuracy 6, Damage 6L, Parry DV —, Speed 5

Clinch: Accuracy 6, Damage 7B, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Soak: 3L/6B

Health Levels: -0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incap.

Dodge DV: 4 **Willpower:** 4

Legend: 1 **Legend Points:** 1

MUSHHUSHSHU (CREATURE ••)

The mushhushshu is distantly related to the dragons of many pantheons, and has an ancient past: It served as the regal mount for the Gods of the Sumerian pantheon (now likely deceased, or at least in a great deal of trouble). The mushhushshu adorns the Ishtar Gate of ancient Babylon in many bright pictorials, showing it as a four-legged beast about the size of a rhinoceros, with yellow-orange lizard-like scales, a sinuous neck, a stubby tail and a frill behind the elongated jaw.

Since the mushhushshu hails from a pantheon that is now all but extinct, it is a creature rarely seen even among Scions. Gods from other pantheons, especially the Pesedjet and the Dodekatheon, occasionally pop up with a mushhushshu for a stalwart young Hero, although they usually confine their comments about it to "keep it out of the cold and make sure it doesn't eat your friends."

Despite its large stature, the mushhushshu is not a terrific combatant. It's also about as smart as one can expect of a lizard. It does, however, provide a wonderful means of transport, because the mushhushshu are extremely blasé around supernatural occurrences. Whether running up the stairwell of an Aztec pyramid, chasing through the Dark Forest of Norse legend or swimming across a sea of blood in the Underworld, the mushhushshu will serve as a mount under nearly any conditions, never complaining or balking. It can't fly, but thanks to its large size it can easily carry a small Band of Scions on its back — particularly important when crossing dangerous territory with wounded companions.

Left to forage, a mushhushshu will feast upon small birds, rodents and mammals. It can depopulate a fairly large area of squirrels in a short time. Usually, the mushhushshu comes with a special Relic • urn in which it can be stored as a cloud of smoke when it's not needed, although on at least one occasion Sobek "gifted" one of his children with a mushhushshu and no way to stable it.

Attributes: Strength 7, Dexterity 2, Stamina 5; Charisma 0, Manipulation 0, Appearance 1; Perception 2, Intelligence 1, Wits 1

Virtues: Conviction 1, Courage 3, Duty 3, Loyalty 3

Abilities: Athletics 3, Awareness 2, Brawl 2, Integrity 1, Survival 2

Supernatural Powers:

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 1 (Uplifting Might), Epic Stamina 1 (Holy Fortitude)

Join Battle: 3

Attacks:

Bite: Accuracy 5, Damage 8L, Parry DV —, Speed 5

Soak: 2L/5B

Health Levels: -0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incap.

Dodge DV: 3 **Willpower:** 3

Legend: 1 **Legend Points:** 1

THUNDERBIRD (CREATURE •••••)

The tremendous thunderbird is depicted on totem poles in the American Northwest, where folk legends pass down stories of the condor-like creature so large and majestic that its wings flap to create thunder and its flashing eyes manifest lightning. The terrible cry of the thunderbird can shake the mountains and cause avalanches. A thunderbird is so massive that it hunts whales out in the ocean, bringing them back with its great talons and tearing them open with its curved beak.

A thunderbird appears as an enormous bird with dark feathers, an arched beak, an angular head and extremely sharp talons. While it is not an especially intelligent creature, it is a fearsome hunter, and it has a propensity for lifting its prey high into the air before dropping it and scavenging the remains.

The thunderbird comes from Northwestern American mythology, but the legend of a great bird could also apply to the roc from Arabian stories or the Peng from Chinese myths. Any Scion could conceivably take a thunderbird as a Creature, particularly after finding a way to cause the bird to imprint to him (perhaps by raising it from an egg or using the Animal Purview). The thunderbird is a natural enemy of the kongamato (**Scion: Demigod**, pp. 263-265), which is a Titan-corrupted, reptilian mockery of the thunderbird's true majesty.

Attributes: Strength 7, Dexterity 4, Stamina 7; Charisma 0, Manipulation 0, Appearance 5; Perception 5, Intelligence 1, Wits 4

Virtues: Courage 3, Endurance 4, Loyalty 2, Vengeance 2

Abilities: Athletics 4, Awareness 3, Brawl 3, Fortitude 4, Integrity 2, Presence 2, Survival 3

Supernatural Powers:

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 2 (Holy Rampage, Uplifting Might), Epic Stamina 1 (Holy Fortitude)

Thunder and Lightning: A thunderbird gains the benefits of the Storm Augmentation Boon (Sky •••, in **Scion: Hero** pp. 146-147) on all of its unarmed strikes at no cost.

Join Battle: 7

Attacks:

Bite: Accuracy 8, Damage 8L, Parry DV 4, Speed 5

Clinch: Accuracy 7, Damage 8B, Parry DV —, Speed 6

Soak: 1A/5L/8B

Health Levels: -0/-0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 5 **Willpower:** 5

Legend: 3 **Legend Points:** 9

Other Notes: A thunderbird's favored tactic is to stun an opponent with its Storm Augmentation, then grab the prey, draw it high into the air and drop it. See the rules for falling damage in **Scion: Hero**, pp. 180-181.

NEW FOLLOWERS

ANAUŠA (FOLLOWERS ••• TO •••••)

With membership fixed at 10,000 men (described in detail by Herodotus), the Anauša — the Persian Immortals — comprised a shock force of tremendous size for the ancient world. Despite their limited technology, the Immortals exhibit excellent organization for their day. Stories say that whenever one fell in battle or to illness, a reserve was called up so that their ranks would always be 10,000 strong. Of that number, 9,000 would carry spears adorned with silver pomegranates, while the outer rank consisted of 1,000 with gold pomegranates on their spears. Every gold pomegranate was the sign of a veteran; by putting the veterans on the outer ranks, the Immortals helped to control and direct the less-experienced green troops, thereby improving morale and holding ranks together. Immortals served both as heavy infantry and as the special Imperial guard, a dual role that highlighted the Emperor's extreme importance as well as providing

a boost in prestige that guaranteed that every Immortal fought to uphold the honor and discipline of the unit.

After the eventual demise of the Achaemenid dynasty at the hands of Alexander the Great, the Immortals ceased to function as a historical unit, but the name lived on. Various royal guards, up to and including the Iranian Imperial Guard in the 1970s, claimed the moniker of "Immortals" to tie their fates (and Fates) to that legend (and Legend). In that sense, the Anauša are much like the einherjar: Everyone who has died under their banner will now be immortal and will fight when called.

Without a pantheon to support them, though, the Anauša are in the position of being a mercenary force. They'll work for whoever can pay them; that payment, however, is in Legend. Scions have Legend in abundance, and by calling on the Immortals for aid, Scions and the Immortals can tie their respective Legends together. As the Scion performs great deeds, the Immortals reinforce their reputation. Soon, some other army or guard will call itself the Immortals, and the myth will grow.

In order to call upon the Immortals, the Scion must offer a point of Legend as payment. The troops spring forth from the Earth fully-formed and armed. Anauša function like experienced soldiers (in **Scion: Hero**, p. 283). When armed only with spears, shields and light leather armor, they count as a unit of five experienced soldiers (Followers •••). More dots in Followers can increase the number or can upgrade to more recent Immortals, such as the Iranian Imperial Guard (complete with modern weapons). Since the dissolution of the Shah's regime, though, no new Immortals have joined the ranks (likely for the same reason that the einherjar have no new recruits).

Unlike the einherjar, the Immortals automatically replace their losses each time they're summoned; the summoning Scion doesn't need to offer them any sort of food and drink. Also unlike the einherjar, they are actually dead. Anauša gain a temporary lease on life and a return to action when summoned through the power of Legend, but if the sun sets while the Anauša are out in force, their bodies shrivel, turn to dust and blow away (along with all of their gear). The Scion must summon them again with a new infusion of Legend.

Because they are now a mercenary force, Anauša gain affinity for the same Virtues as that of the Scion who calls upon them (distribute 5 dots between Virtues when they are summoned). They will fight hard and loyally for whatever cause their master dictates, so long as they are provided with Legend. The one exception is that they will never serve a Scion of the Dodekatheon.

Ghilan (Followers ••• to •••••)

In Islamic folklore, travelers would sometimes come across a graveyard and find scattered corpses dug up and gnawed upon, blaming the desecration on ghouls that clawed their way out of the ground and feasted upon the other bodies. Ghilan (the plural of ghoul) represent packs of these hungry corpses.

Mechanically, ghilan function like hungry dead (**Scion: Hero**, pp. 294-295). Unlike hungry dead, though, ghilan can speak (and some are given to being quite talkative, complete with a dark sense of humor). Ghilan also restore health simply by devouring human (or near-human) flesh without having to eat brains, so a ghoul can restore health levels equal to a body's (former living) Stamina score. If properly disguised, a ghoul could pass for a human (in the dark, with a heavy coat and if you didn't mind the stench). Taking Followers ••• grants the Scion a group of five ghilan, while additional dots increase the amount as usual.

Because they're tough, clever and able to follow directions, ghilan can make a frightening force. Ghilan do not normally come equipped with any sort of gear beyond perhaps a loincloth or burial shroud, but they can use simple implements of destruction like crowbars, baseball bats and machetes. They prefer, though, to rend and tear potential prey with their hands and teeth.

Ghilan only come when called by an appropriate Relic, or if the Scion offers them a tasty treat — a piece of bone or flesh from a recently-dead person, perhaps. Left to their own devices, ghilan will also sniff out other corpses and dig them up for feasting. Thus, a Scion should keep a tight rein on them unless he wants them to wander off and get up to all sorts of mischief that will garner unwanted attention.

Ghilan have only one Virtue: the Dark Virtue of Rapacity. The fact that ghilan have a Dark Virtue should be enough to give a Scion pause in commanding them, but when you're losing a war, you take the allies that you can get.

Sprites (Followers • to •••••, Guide •)

Sprites — from the same root word that gave us spirits — are perhaps one of the most humbling Followers a Scion can have. While the term "sprite" in general mythology refers to the entire class of faeries, malevolent spirits and mischievous creatures, the Scion who calls upon these Followers finds that he has access to an "army" of small gremlins, boggans, pixies and similar figures (probably much to his dismay). Sprites aren't just whimsical faerie folk that might be erroneously laid at the feet of the Tuatha Dé Dannan, though: They could be small brown-skinned goblin-like creatures, such as the bakemono of Japan, or they could appear as tiny dragonfly-like winged serpents, in a miniature form of the coatl. For a Scion of the voodoo pantheon, they might resemble ghostly, disembodied heads. Whatever their appearance, they come in swarms that emit strange noises, give off eerie lights and are usually embarrassingly small.

Like other magical followers, sprites generally appear only when called. Most commonly, the Scion keeps the sprites trapped in some form of container — an ensorcelled bottle, a shoe box tied with a magic string, a wicker basket for lucky crickets — and lets them out only when necessary. Naturally, sprites will whine and complain about this imprisonment, so occasionally a Scion has to get tough with them when it's time to go back in the box.

In spite of their drawbacks, sprites do have one redeeming characteristic: They're unfailingly loyal. A sprite will never betray its patron. If guided correctly and used with discretion, sprites can form the backbone of a stealth task team that's hard to catch.

Sprites can serve as regular Followers, with each dot representing five sprites. Alternatively, a single sprite could serve as a one-dot Guide.

Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 4, Stamina 1; Charisma 2, Manipulation 1, Appearance 2; Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Virtues: Loyalty 5

Abilities: Animal Ken 1, Awareness 3, Craft 1, Empathy 3, Integrity 5, Larceny 3, Occult 1, Stealth 3

Supernatural Powers:

Boons: Wind's Freedom (Sky • •)

Glow: An individual sprite can glow with a soft light equivalent to a candle by spending one point of Legend. This glow lasts for the scene, or until the sprite douses the light or is destroyed.

Join Battle: 6

Attacks:

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 4, Damage 2B, Parry DV 3, Speed 4

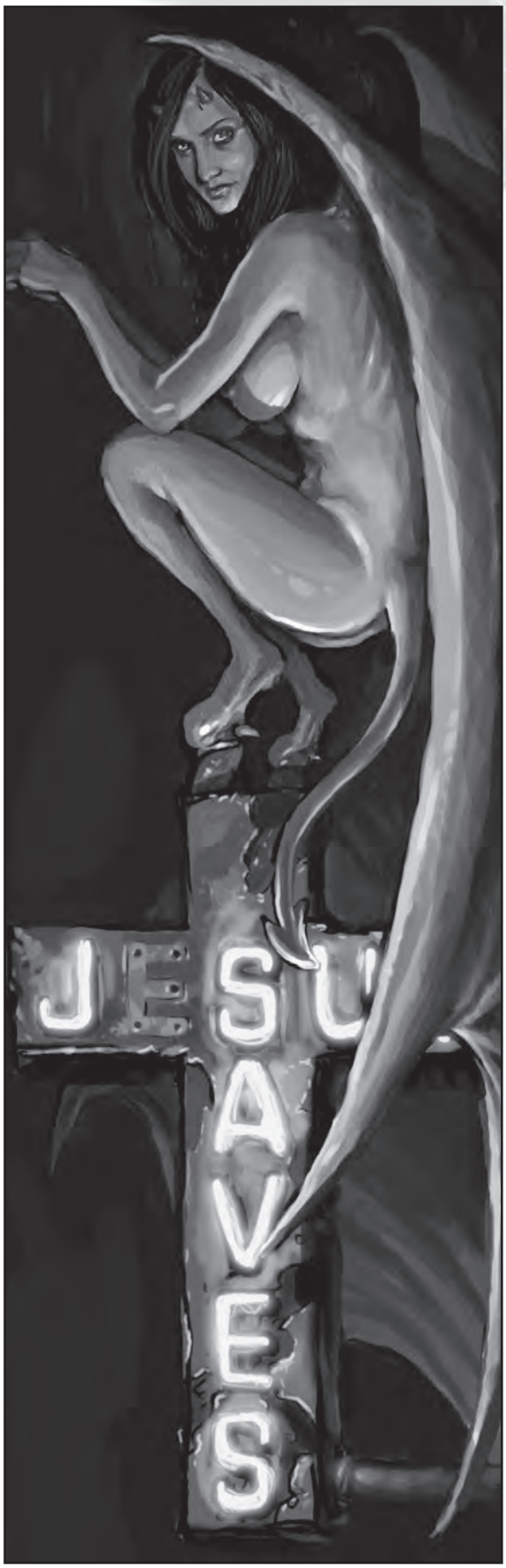
Soak: 1B

Health Levels: -0/-1/-2/-4/Incap.

Dodge DV: 3 **Willpower:** 6

Legend: 1 **Legend Points:** 1

Other Notes: Sprites can fly, float or hover, but they still only move at walking speed. Due to their tiny size, sprites cannot perform heavy attacks nor can they clinch someone (although a large group of them working in concert *might* be able to briefly hold a foe). Because sprites do not have the Brawl skill, their unarmed attacks are at +2 difficulty.



NEW GUIDES

MARA SECARE (GUIDE •••••)

Succubus at Large

Mara is a succubus freed from the Underworld by the wreckage wrought in the wake of the Titans' escape. Capable of changing her appearance to suit the lusts and desires of any man (or woman), she survives by stealing the health from unwitting mortals and using it to power her own Legend through a series of one-night stands and the occasional lingering dalliance. It may sound horrible, but a girl's gotta survive somehow, right?

Of course, once she meets a Scion, Mara becomes absolutely overwhelmed. She's skittish, even fearful. She begs for clemency and a chance to explain. While trapped in the Underworld for ages as a creature of spirit, she interacted with the other spirits of the damned and came to realize her own tenuous position. She likes the World better than the Underworld, and she likes flesh better than spirit.

She wants to be good, so that she can stay and enjoy living. Once she acts as a Guide to the Scion, Mara proves to be as good as her word. She uses her seductive powers to bait mortals as needed, especially if she can lick off a few points of Legend by draining them with a little kiss (or a little more). She explains the nature of the Underworld and helpfully discusses some of its movers, shakers and denizens. She's on her best behavior, slowly warming to the patron Scion like an adopted child to her parent. Whether she stays on her course of good behavior or ends up manipulating the Scion toward her own ends is up to the Storyteller.

Mara typically appears as a strikingly attractive person of the preferred sex of her new friend. She's always dressed well, if perhaps just a bit provocatively. In her "real" form, she's a demonic woman with coppery skin, black hair, tiny claws, tremendous black bat-like wings that sprout from her back, tiny horns on her forehead, glowing eyes, a thin reptilian tail (complete with a tiny spike on the end) and retrograde legs with hooves.

Mara isn't attached to any particular pantheon. While nearly every set of myths and legends includes some sort of story about seductive life-stealers and vampires, she doesn't neatly fit into any pantheon's categories. She represents a Guide whose provenance is suspect, but whose talents are undeniable.

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4; Charisma 5, Manipulation 5, Appearance 5; Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Virtues: Endurance 1, Expression 2, Loyalty 2, Vengeance 1

Abilities: Art 1, Athletics 1, Awareness 3, Brawl 1, Command 3, Empathy 5, Fortitude 1, Integrity 1, Larceny 2, Occult 4, Politics 2, Presence 4, Stealth 2

Supernatural Powers:

Epic Attributes: Epic Stamina 1 (Damage Conversion), Epic Charisma 2 (Benefit of the Doubt, Blessing of Importance), Epic Manipulation 2 (Blurt It Out, Gods' Honest), Epic Appearance 2 (Center of Attention, Come Hither)

Boons: Blessing of Health/Curse of Frailty (Health • •)

Life Stealing: Mara can only regain Legend by draining life energy. She does so through intimate contact. The victim need not be willing, although she must clinch and pin such a subject in order to use this attack. When she makes contact, she pits her (Manipulation + Empathy + Legend) against the subject's (Willpower + Integrity + Legend). If she wins, she steals away one health level (taken as bashing damage) and gains a point of Legend.

Poison Stinger: In her demonic form, Mara's tail has a stinger with a paralytic poison. This poison has Tolerance —, Damage paralysis for 3-30 ticks, Toxicity 6, Penalty -2 (successes on resisting the Toxicity reduce the duration, which is determined by rolling three ten-sided dice and adding them). Mara can only use this poison once per hour.

Shapeshifting: Mara, like so many seductresses of legend, can assume the form of any normal man or woman. She cannot, however, impersonate a specific person: She can only create broad characteristics for herself (hair color, skin tone and the like). She can re-assume any form that she has previously used with perfect accuracy, though.

Join Battle: 6

Attacks:

Claw: Accuracy 5, Damage 3L, Parry DV 3, Speed 4

Clinch: Accuracy 5, Damage 3B, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Tail Sting: Accuracy 6, Damage 3L + poison, Parry DV 3, Speed 4

Soak: 2L/4B

Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 4 **Willpower:** 6

Legend: 3 **Legend Points:** 9

SIMON TELAMON (GUIDE •••)

Ajax Security Elite Consultant

Every generation, a few mortals stand out, head and shoulders above the masses. While not quite Scions, they certainly don't lack for courage, determination and skill. Perhaps they were Scions who never received a Visitation and were left to live up to a crippled potential, or maybe they really are just mortals who are *that* good.

Simon Telamon is one such mortal. He's better than a veteran soldier. He's better than a cutthroat mercenary: He's just the right man for the job. Simon Telamon has a sketchy background, as all men of his type do. He participated in a multitude of brush wars and shadow ops on various sides. He's done bodyguard detail, crack driving, wetwork, infiltration and Rambo-esque fire support missions.

These days, he wears a chauffeur's cap and a fitted suit with an armored vest. Of course, he has an abundance of weapons, from the pistols in the back to the collapsible batons in the sleeves and the plastic knives in his boots. Whether he's leaning from a helicopter door with a zip-line and a machine gun or leaping from the prow of one boat to another while stabbing Nigerian pirates with a jammed spear gun, he's at home in the thick of the action, just like his former incarnation — Telamonian Ajax, mortal hero and companion to Odysseus.

Simon Telamon's far too experienced and unique to be a simple Follower. He can serve as a Guide to a Scion who treated him fairly, especially one from the Dodekatheon. It's up to the Storyteller to decide whether he knows that he's a reincarnation of a famous mortal hero or not. Most likely, his soul escaped the Underworld in the wake of the Titans and has since taken up residence in a new home to its liking. You can easily create other mortal Guides on this theme by reincarnating some ostensibly mortal person of great resolve, such as Alexander the Great, Cao Cao or JFK.

Note that Simon Telamon has a Legend score, and so many of his derived statistics round up instead of down. However, he is still a mortal, and thus doesn't have Virtues.

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 4, Stamina 5; Charisma 4, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3; Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Abilities: Academics 2, Athletics 5, Awareness 4, Brawl 5, Command 4, Control 4 (Cars), Control 3 (Helicopters), Fortitude 5, Integrity 5, Investigation 2, Larceny 2, Marksmanship 5, Medicine 2, Melee 5, Presence 3, Stealth 4, Thrown 4

Join Battle: 8

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 10, Damage 6B, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 9, Damage 9B, Parry DV 3, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 11, Damage 6B, Parry DV 6, Speed 4

H&K MP5: Accuracy 9, Damage 4L, Range 30, Speed 5, P

M16: Accuracy 9, Damage 6L, Range 150, Speed 5, P

Peacemaker: Accuracy 11, Damage 5L, Range 20, Speed 5, P

Soak: 2L/7B (Bulletproof vest, +2L/2B)

Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 5 **Willpower:** 6

Legend: 1 **Legend Points:** 1

Other Notes: Simon Telamon has a veritable arsenal of weapons stashed away in various locations, from a houseboat moored conveniently at the city docks to a tarp-covered hole out in an arroyo near the suburbs. While "on duty," he typically wears a bulletproof vest and carries a pistol. If he expects to go into heavy combat, he'll upgrade to submachine guns, assault rifles or rocket launchers, as the situation demands.

TETSU DEBU (GUIDE ••••)

Boddhisattva Oni

Found wandering the roads outside of Wakkanai on the northern tip of Hokkaidō, Tetsu Debu managed to survive a tremendous storm when he took shelter in a tiny mountain shrine. Originally, the giant planned to eat the old monk that he found meditating at the shrine, but as the storm whistled and howled, the monk told Tetsu Debu amusing anecdotes and koans. When the storm finally abated forty hours later, the monk smiled, nodded his head and died. Tetsu Debu, profoundly moved by the monk's words, buried the body with care before setting out to find his own Buddha nature. He wasn't entirely sure where it was, but he knew that if he wandered long enough, he'd find it.

Convinced of his need to escape karma, he has decided to become a Buddhist. Granted, a forty-hour-lecture given to a giant with the intelligence of a lizard hardly prepares one for a life of contemplation. Regardless, Tetsu Debu still does a lot of the things that Oni do: He beats up his enemies with his club, and he consumes truly prodigious amounts of food and drink.

In spite of his quirks, Tetsu Debu is very loyal to any Scion who takes him on, serving both as a combatant and as an occasional reminder of muddled-up Buddhist, Shinto and Hindu thought. He also knows some startling facts about other Oni and the weaknesses of certain titanspawn, which can be useful when a Scion's busy with figuring out how to kill the latest horrid thing to slither out from under a rock.

Tetsu Debu uses the statistics for a generic giant on p. 314 of **Scion: Hero**, except that he also has the Ability of Academics 2, and he has replaced his Dark Virtues with the Virtues of Duty 1, Harmony 1, Loyalty 1 and Order 1. A Scion who takes Tetsu Debu as a Guide hopefully has some way to feed the giant, since his appetite is prodigious, as is his propensity for "helpfully" failing at inopportune moments. Nevertheless, Tetsu Debu can also come through with shining colors, as long as the Scion remains aware of the giant's inherent limitations.

NEW RELICS

CODEX IXTLILXOCHTLI

Relic ••• (1 Purview, 2 Unique 1-Dot Powers)

When the Spaniards devastated the Triple Kingdom, the Christian priests burned several bound, painted pictorial books that showed the history and traditions of the Aztec people. Few codices survived this purge. The Codex Ixtlilxochtil is among the older codices, and it illustrates a series of pictures that explain the Aztec calendar and the relation of the gods to various calendar days. It also demonstrates (in bloody detail) the rites that priests must perform in order to gain the favor of the Gods.

The Codex Ixtlilxochtli is an invaluable tool for any Scion of the Aztec pantheon. By following the guided instructions, the user can access the Magic, Mystery or Prophecy Purviews. The Codex can only show one such Purview's instructions at a time; the Scion must use a miscellaneous action to page through the Codex and find the right instructions if he wishes to use the Codex for a different Purview.

The Codex is also capable of disguising itself, which may explain how some of them survived destruction at the hands of the Spaniards. With a thought, the Scion who owns the Codex can cause it to reshape itself into the form of any ordinary book. It can be made to look like a Bible, a children's picture book, a trashy romance novel or even a role-playing game supplement. The Scion can still use it to access a Purview, though, simply by reading the text inside — which, for the Scion, always seems to contain the needed instructions. The Codex can also be commanded to resume its usual form at no cost, which is necessary if the Scion wishes to change its Purview access.

APOLLO'S NECKLACE

Relic • • (1 Purview, 1 Unique 1-Dot Power)

While this necklace bears Apollo's name, it grants access to an unusual Purview for the sun God. Although it appears to be a simple piece of twisted metal that reflects rainbow colors in the sun, its true nature is apparent only to a Scion with a firm grasp of science and craftsmanship. This particular Relic is forged from metal taken from the hull of the Apollo mission, from the lander that came back to Earth, making it one of the few objects on the planet that has been to the moon. As a result, the necklace grants access to the Moon Purview.

Additionally, the necklace allows its Scion owner to inspire those around her, mortal and otherwise. Just looking at the reflective piece of twisted metal, people somehow intuitively know that it means something important. They can't necessarily say what, but it fills viewers with a sense of longing, wonder and adventure. With a successful (Charisma + Presence + Legend) roll against an onlooker's (Willpower + Integrity + Legend), the Scion's player can activate the Relic's power. The viewer feels a sense of mystic fulfillment and becomes more positively inclined toward the Relic's wearer.

GUN WING MASK

Relic • • • (1 Purview, 1 Unique 2-Dot Power)

Recognized by otaku everywhere, this helmet looks exactly like a flight helmet from any modern-day anime with giant robots and psychic pilots. This item offers limited protection to the wearer's head, although it is far from a full suit of armor (at best, it might grant an extra soak die if an attack happened to strike the Scion in the head). Like the mempo worn by samurai in feudal Japan, though, the object helps to strike terror into the enemy and gives the wearer a sense of battle superiority. As such, the Scion can use it to access the War Purview.

Furthermore, this helmet contains its own air filtration system, so it automatically (and magically) scrubs impurities out of the air. The Scion can breathe normally in smoke, underwater or even in space (although the pressure might hurt the rest of his body). Similarly, it completely protects the eyes against dust, harmful liquids or anything else that might get in them and obscure the Scion's view.

IGJALLAR

Relic • • (1 Purview, 1 Unique 1-Dot Power)

Sometimes what a Scion really needs is to contact the rest of her Band, regardless of niggling interference like distance, underground depth or

location in some lost terra incognita. The iGjallar serves as the modern version of a sounding horn: It's a smartphone with a direct uplink to the Overworld. While the iGjallar is a particular Norse spin on the idea, other Pantheons have latched onto this notion as well and sometimes provide similar devices with divinely-imbued uplinks.

The iGjallar performs all of the functions that a regular smartphone can perform, with the added bonus that the Scion never needs to worry about pesky details like a service contract or reception in the hinterlands. While an iGjallar can access the regular phone network, it does so by sending a signal up through the Overworld and then back down to the World, so it receives reception almost anywhere. Only when the user is in a strange terra incognita unknown to the gifting Gods (such as a special location sacred to another pantheon) does it lose signal.

A divine smartphone like the iGjallar also serves as a Relic, providing access to the Psychopomp purview.

SAN GREAL

Relic • • • • • (1 Purview, 1 Unique 4-Dot Power)

The *san greal*, or Holy Grail, is most definitively associated with Christian iconography. Its existence as a Relic is one of the strange mysteries surrounding exactly which pantheons have sway in the World. It might actually have to do with ancient legends from the Tuatha Dé Dannan regarding the cauldron of Matholwch (an ancient king), or it might actually have to do with some historical version of the King Arthur legend.

The san greal appears to be a humble wooden cup. It has no handle, only a simple stand and a hand-carved bowl. Like the chalices of earlier eras, it is wider than it is deep, but when filled with a liquid, its rich, dark red wood glows softly.

When a potable liquid is poured into the san greal, the Relic automatically removes all impurities. "Impurities" in this sense means drugs, poisons, dirt and similar deleterious substances. The san greal renders the liquid perfectly fit for consumption, although it has no effect on liquids not normally consumed (such as molten silver or gasoline).

Additionally, the san greal has the power to convert water poured into it into a holy liquid that cures diseases, nullifies poisons and heals wounds. When the Scion with the san greal expends a point of Legend, she empowers the vessel to work its healing magic. Each point of Legend spent allows the san greal's healing waters to cure one health level of bashing or lethal damage; two points of Legend will heal one health level of aggravated damage. The san greal can't restore the dead to life, but it can heal any wound short of that. (At the Storyteller's discretion, certain intractable poisons or diseases, such as those inflicted by a Titan, might require additional Legend for a cure). The san greal also offers its owner access to the Health purview.

As told in stories, the san greal can only be held by the "pure of heart." Who makes these rules is uncertain, but the reality is that the san greal will only operate in the hands of a Scion with a rating of 4 or more in the Virtue of Piety. The Scion doesn't have to believe in the Christian faith; she simply has to believe in *a* faith.

SHU FEATHER

Relic • • • (2 Purviews, 1 Unique 1-Dot Power)

The shu feather is held by the minor Pesedjet Goddess Ma'at, the personification of justice and social order for the Egyptian pantheon. When a soul reaches the Underworld, it is the shu feather that is placed on a balance scale against the human heart to determine whether the soul is righteous enough to proceed to the lands of paradise, or if the soul must remain in the early, hellish stages of Duat. Anubis traditionally oversees this procedure and occasionally gives out a shu feather to his children or those favored by the Pesedjet.

As a representation of judgment over the soul, the shu feather grants access to the Death and Justice Purviews. The feather can also determine the morality of the living while it is in the hands of a living Scion. The owner simply places the feather on her palm, nib down, and expends one point of Legend. As she does so, the feather stands straight up on end. The Scion then indicates a target and her player rolls (Perception + Empathy) against the subject's (Willpower + Integrity + Legend). If the Scion's player wins, she immediately learns the target's highest Virtue. If the target has no Virtues, she learns that fact instead. Successive uses can determine lower Virtues in the same target.

NEW PURVIEWS AND BOONS

The various Purviews listed in **Scion: Hero**, **Scion: Demigod** and **Scion: God** assume a very linear approach. While a given Scion doesn't need to learn all of the powers in order, any Scion who chooses to master a Purview will wind up with the same set of powers as any other user of the same Purview.

To remedy this linearity, this section introduces several new Purview levels that can substitute for existing levels. When you're building a Scion character or spending experience, purchase these just like you would any other Purview. Spend the requisite dots or experience points for the Purviews level, and your Scion

ATLANTEAN VIRTUES

The Atlantean Pantheon, in its heyday, embraced four cardinal Virtues, much as other Pantheons did. When Atlantis fell into decay and became a mockery of its former glory, the people turned to the Dark Virtues instead (**Scion: Hero**, pp. 309-310). An Atlantean Scion who unearths the ancient ways and diligently works to uphold the best qualities of his lost civilization and Gods, though, might feel the call of the ancient Virtues once more.

Due to their commitment to family and their strong emphasis on travel, technology and an orderly world, the Atlantean Pantheon embraced the Virtues of Duty, Intellect, Order and Piety.

has a nifty new power. In fact, you can still choose the alternative power that you didn't take before: Simply spend the same number of points again.

In addition to the alternative Purview Boons, this section contains a complete run-down of the Atlantean Purview. Next time your Band decides to head out to Antarctica, you'll be ready to surprise them.

Finally, at the end of the section are several new spells for use with the Magic Purview, in case your Scions haven't found enough ways to Fatebind themselves to others yet.

SCĪRE

The old Atlantean language is long gone. Perhaps the Gods of Atlantis still speak it, but even if they do, none of their young Scions in the modern age would understand it. The closest that one can come is perhaps to look for the Indo-European language that focused on a rigid, highly structured approach to explaining the world (one that is, not coincidentally, also a dead language). *Scīre* is a Latin verb meaning "to know," and it represents the rudiments of the Atlantean specific Purview: the knowledge based on understanding the workings of the World and its component parts. It's no surprise that with this Purview, the Atlanteans excelled at the mastery of technology. Their civilization grew to such heights early in the development of humankind in part because of Scīre.

The power of Scīre to dissect and understand the World also means that Atlantean Scions may potentially be among the most dangerous powers to emerge, if any of them rear their heads. By using Scīre, an Atlantean could potentially master and manipulate the full range of modern technology in ways that the ancient Gods rarely bother to do. With the possibility of controlling the World Wide Web or the leftover nuclear weapons from the Cold War, it's a good thing that no Atlantean Scion has shown up to take over the World...yet.

FUNDAMENTAL (SCĪRE •)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 Legend

The fundamental principle of Scīre is *to know*, as the name indicates, but this also means that the Scion must understand the World and deduce its rules. Activating the Fundamenal Boon gives an Atlantean a bolstered sense of mechanics and physical laws. The Atlantean's player adds the character's Scīre rating to all dice pools involving the Craft or Science Ability. Unlike the Arete Purview of the Dodekatheon, though, this benefit does not scale increasingly with higher levels; the Atlantean only gains a bonus equal to the character's highest level of Scīre.

LITERATI (SCĪRE ••)

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Science

Cost: 1 Legend

The Scion touches an object that contains information — most commonly a book or paper, though possibly also a computer disk, a flash drive or a rune-covered tablet — and in a moment, all of the information contained on the item floods into the Scion's mind. Depending upon the complexity of the information, the Storyteller may set a difficulty for the (Intelligence + Science) roll, but most basic books and texts require only one success for this transfer. Works covering complex or esoteric topics may require three to five successes to decipher, and the difficulty should increase by five or more if the work is in an unknown language or format (such as the binary code on a magnetic storage device). The Scion doesn't necessarily understand all of the fine details of the data, but she has access to all of the raw facts; the information is essentially downloaded into her brain.

Information gathered via this Boon remains in the Scion's mind for one scene, after which time it starts to fade and becomes too muddled to use. The exception is if the Scion has the Perfect Memory Epic Intelligence Knack (in **Scion: Hero**, pp. 135-136), in which case it all remains in her memory permanently.

INTUITIVE ADAPTATION (SCĪRE •••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 Legend

Having instinctively learned the laws of physics within the material world, the Atlantean gains the ability to perform great feats of technical precision. The Atlantean's bonus from the Fundamental (Scīre •) Boon now extends to *any* task in which the Atlantean uses a technological device. For the purposes of this power, any action that the Scion undertakes while

using a tool with moving parts, chemical reactions or electricity — anything more complex than a simple machine, basically — benefits from the bonus dice that Fundamental normally provides to Craft and Science tasks. If the Scion performs a tool-utilizing task that relies on one of those Abilities, such as reprogramming a computer, then activating this Boon in conjunction with Fundamental allows the bonus to stack, giving the player bonus dice equal to twice the character's highest level of Scīre. Tasks that use a different Ability, such as Marksmanship with a Relic gun, can still gain a bonus equal to the Scion's level of Scīre when this Boon is activated. Once activated, this Boon remains in effect for the duration of the scene.

CONSEQUENCE (SCĪRE ••••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 Legend

With but a glance, the Scion looks at a simple object or tool and ponders, "What would happen if I...." As a result, he gains an intuitive knowledge of an event that would occur immediately after doing whatever it was that he was thinking of doing. For instance, if the Scion glanced at a car that had been rigged to explode and said, "What would happen if I turned on that car?" he would immediately know that it will explode. Conversely, if he looks at a normal door and asks, "What will happen if I open that door?," the only real answer is that he will be able to enter the building.

PROPER TOOL (SCĪRE •••••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 2 Legend

Although an Atlantean can often adapt quickly to changing conditions with the Intuitive Adaptation Knack, her gear and devices might not follow suit as quickly. Delicate contraptions can be quickly ruined by exposure to sea water. Guns misfire and electronics fail in heavy rain. Extreme cold can ruin plastics by making them brittle, or the heat of a raging volcano might start to melt plastics. Fortunately, Scīre provides the foresight and the mystical endurance to protect against such hazards. The Atlantean simply invokes this Boon and all items that she wears, carries or holds become protected from environmental hazards to the same degree that she is. That is, if she has Fire Immunity (Fire •), all of her clothes and possessions have it, too. Indeed, the Scion's own Epic Stamina Knacks can make her possessions resistant to a wide range of hazards, because her gear gains all of her immunities and resistances.

Once activated, Proper Tool remains in effect for the rest of the scene. Any item that the Scion holds receives its benefits; anything that she drops loses the protection at once. This power does not extend to living creatures that the Scion might be carrying.

REMOTE CONTROL (SCĪRE ••••• •)

Dice Pool: Dexterity + Control

Cost: 3 Legend

Atlanteans devised myriad cunning devices (for their time), and their familiarity with technology gave them a tremendous ability to interact with and command devices. Every physical law and every device was seen as interlinked with the Scion's understanding of the World, so the demigods and Gods of the Atlantean Pantheon knew well the notion that the most minute action could reverberate with consequences felt across reality. A simple act such as raising one's hands could change a balance point on a complex system of weights and thereby trigger a gearing system that opened a tremendous door. The use of Scīre refined this principle to such heights that an Atlantean could, with the simplest of gestures, exert precise command over the technologies of the golden civilization.

Using Remote Control, an Atlantean Scion can manipulate a device from a distance. The Scion pantomimes the actions that the device is to take, and the device follows suit. This could be as straightforward as remotely yanking the levers for a crane or as complex as remotely turning on a computer and typing at the keyboard. The device in all ways responds as if the Scion is actually touching and manipulating it, although the Scion can only exert enough force to work its controls. This Boon would not allow a Scion to telekinetically pick up a keyboard and fling it out of a window, for instance.

Without the use of other Boons or Knacks, the Scion does not necessarily have any way to tell what he's actually doing. Typing on a computer keyboard from across a room may be amusing (and frustrating to the poor secretary), but it's not likely to be productive unless the Scion has some way to tell what's happening over there (such as with the Wireless Interface Epic Intelligence Knack, on p. 65 of **Scion: Demigod**). Unlike the Wireless Interface Knack, though, this Boon allows the Scion to manipulate all manner of machinery, not just electronics.

Once Remote Control is invoked, it functions on one chosen item and lasts for the rest of the scene. Any use of Remote Control is subject to the normal (Attribute + Ability) tests that might be needed to use the devices in question, but is also capped by the activating Scion's (Dexterity + Control) total.

MASTERFUL VECTOR (SCĪRE ••••• ••)

Dice Pool: Wits + Marksmanship

Cost: 3 Legend

A quick appraisal of a situation allows the demigod to surmise immediately the best way to exert a force such that it affects as many targets as desired, while leaving other targets unscathed. With any ranged attack or special power that targets an area, the demigod can choose whom to include and exclude from the effect. The demigod can leave entire areas unscathed while victims are trapped in whatever other nastiness she devises. If the Atlantean

uses a weapon that normally sprays an area, such as an acid-spraying pump or a flamethrower, she exerts complete control over where its devastation lands. In conjunction with a Boon or Knack, the Atlantean gains total influence over its area of effect, able to include or exclude specific locations, people or even parts of certain targets, as desired. She cannot reshape a power beyond its original range or "trade" some of its internal volume to stretch it past its normal limits, though. The player's (Wits + Marksmanship) activation roll determines how many targets the demigod may choose to selectively exclude from an area effect.

Masterful Vector applies the supernatural precision of Scīre to an attack, so it is only effective when used with a technological device or in conjunction with an area attack invoked by a Relic (be it a special power of the Relic or a Boon invoked with it). The Scion couldn't reshape an avalanche with this power (unless it was called down by a Relic), but she could easily warp the dimensions of a flamethrower, hand grenade or blast of fire created with the Fire Purview.

ANTICIPATION (SCĪRE ••••• •••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 10 Legend

The keen Atlantean mind can anticipate the connections proceeding from nearly any chain of events. Indeed, just by rapidly applying the knowledge of the World to a given situation, combined with facts about the God's own capabilities, the Atlantean can derive an accurate conjecture regarding the outcome of any action. The player simply expends the appropriate Legend points before taking an action. After rolling for the outcome of an action, the player may then choose to undo that action and take a different one instead. In effect, the God foresees the consequences of taking a particular tack and decides to do something else. Note that after rolling for an action, the God must either abide by those results or change to a different action — the player cannot decide to roll, take a different action, then do the same action again (as a "different action") with a new roll.

It is possible to use Anticipation multiple times in one turn, so long as the player pays the Legend point cost for each action.

DEEP SECRET (SCĪRE ••••• ••••)

Dice Pool: Wits + Stealth

Cost: 1 Willpower + 10 Legend

Though most of Scīre concerns itself with knowing the World and understanding its natural laws, the Deep Secret Boon inverts this principle. The Scion calls to mind a certain fact that she knows from personal experience. She writes this fact down in some fashion, storing it on a disk, in a computer or on a scrap of paper. Then she invokes this Boon, and the fact is whisked away from common memory, turned into a secret stored only on the place where she wrote it. Even the God herself doesn't remember the fact — which makes for a great alibi, since she can truthfully claim ignorance.

The difficulty to erase a fact depends on how widely spread it is. If only the Scion herself knows a specific fact, then erasing it from her own mind has a base difficulty of 10. The difficulty rises to 15 if the fact is known to a small group of people (10 or less) or stored in very rare books or databases. The difficulty increases by 5 again for each order of magnitude by which the number of people who know it rises. Thus, the difficulty is 10 for 100 people, 15 for 1,000 people, 20 for 10,000 people and so on. Erasing a commonly-known fact from the knowledge of the entire world (population approximately six billion) would have a difficulty of 55.

Once erased, a fact disappears from the knowledge of everyone who knew it and from every source of information that carried it. The *function* of the fact still persists, so the Internet would still run even if nobody remembered what an IP address was, for instance. It would certainly be harder to debug, though, especially since there would no longer be any way for a system utility to reference such an address in a form that a person could read!

The existence of particular people cannot be purged from knowledge in this fashion: Living, thinking beings are far too unpredictable and too interactive with the World to be so casually removed. Just about anything else is fair game, though: Scions might forget about the existence of a particular Relic for which they were questing, for instance.

If anyone ever re-reads the original fact from the place where it was stored, then the Boon's power ends and the fact is re-asserted to all of the locations where it was once known.

ULTIMATE EFFECT (SCĪRE ••••• •••••)

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Science

Cost: 1 Willpower + 15 Legend

If knowledge is power, then ultimate knowledge is ultimate power. The God's supreme understanding of universal principles enables the Scion to cheat those principles. The player spends the necessary Willpower and Legend and makes an (Intelligence + Science) roll, and the God attempts to violate the laws of causality.

Performing this particular feat allows the God to escape the consequences of one action. In many ways, this power is similar to Solipsistic Well-Being (**Scion: Hero**, p. 129), but much more wide-ranging and potent. When a God invokes this power in response to a particular action, it's as if the action didn't happen to the Scion at all. This could be as simple as evading a bullet (probably a trivial use, since bullets don't do much to most Gods) or as potent as completely avoiding the power of an enemy God or Titan. The Atlantean God may make a slight shrug or a brief glance to one side, but no matter how immense the effect, it has no bearing on the God. Entire cities might

crumble around the God in the face of a tremendous attack, but the God is completely untouched.

One power remains outside of the ability of the God to nullify, naturally: Fate. The God cannot negate or avoid Fatebindings or Fateful Aura effects by using this Boon. Ultimate Effect also cannot ignore the powers of a God in Avatar form — such a being is performing the work of Fate through the auspices of its chosen power.

Ultimate Effect only functions on powers that affect the invoking God personally. Other people or items that might be affected are in no way protected. A God may only invoke Ultimate Effect once per story.

ANIMAL

FAUNAPHAGIA (ANIMAL •••)

Dice Pool: Stamina + Animal Ken
Cost: 1 Willpower + 1 Legend

Some shamans believe that consuming a creature grants a measure of its strength. Scions who engage in this practice learn to absorb the capabilities of an animal by devouring such a creature and drawing forth its essence from the digested flesh. The Scion must eat a piece of meat from the appropriate animal (a potentially risky act, considering that the animal is probably considered sacred to his patron God). Then, the player expends the Willpower and Legend and rolls (Stamina + Animal Ken). The successes scored indicate the number of points of Abilities that the Scion may borrow from the animal. See the animal templates on pp. 328-332 of **Scion: Hero**. A Scion can only borrow Abilities up to the level possessed by the animal, although these dots can add on to his existing skill dots to a maximum total of five.

Skills gained with Faunaphagia remain for the rest of the scene.

PAPER TIGER (ANIMAL ••••• ••)

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Art
Cost: 1 Willpower + 5 Legend per act of creation; 1 Legend per unit

While some demigods use the primal power of their ichor to grant life with the Create Animal Boon (Animal ••••• ••, **Scion: Demigod** pp. 70-71), others use the artistic work of creation to infuse their conjurations. Indeed, this act may explain the Neolithic cave paintings of various animals scattered about in caves inhabited by early humanity.

The Scion invoking Paper Tiger draws or creates a picture or icon — even a scratching in sand — indicative of the animal that she wishes to conjure. She could keep a handy painting available for later use if desired, so that she's not stuck scribbling on paper in the middle of a fight. The player then rolls (Intelligence + Art) and spends the requisite Legend and Willpower points. Consult the table on p. 71 of **Scion: Demigod** for the cost per unit when conjuring a creature. Instead of using her own ichor, the Scion infuses the picture with her Legend and her creative energy to give it power. The number of units that the character can summon is limited by the threshold successes on the roll: The more compelling the Scion's art, the more creatures she can summon forth.

Once the player determines how many creatures are called, they spring forth from the surface, transforming in a second from scrawled lines or painted icons into full-sized flesh-and-blood animals of the chosen type. As with Create Animal, the Scion may choose not to create as many animals as she is capable of generating from her player's successes or Legend expenditures, but she cannot conjure incomplete animals. The animals that spring out of the art in this fashion last for the rest of the scene or until killed, at which point they dissolve into nothingness. An animal that fades away at the end of the scene returns to the picture; an animal that is killed leaves no picture behind (and the piece of art is no longer useful unless a new picture is drawn).

CHAOS

LABYRINTHINE LINGERING (CHAOS •••••)

Dice Pool: Wits + Awareness
Cost: 5 Legend

The Scion stands in the middle of a crossroads, a hallway or an intersection — any place where a choice of direction could be made — and summons the confusion of chaos into the area. For the rest of the scene, anyone who enters that intersection becomes unable to determine direction. Compasses wildly spin, GPS locators lose their signal and landmarks shift and can't be pinned down. The Chaos-user remains able to navigate, but anyone else who isn't touching the invoking Scion becomes completely turned around. When a traveler passes through the area, no matter what precautions he takes, he becomes disoriented and exits in a random direction.

This power doesn't affect anyone with a higher Legend rating than the invoking Scion. Other creatures with Legend ratings may attempt to resist it with a (Perception + Awareness + Legend) roll, pitted against the invoking Scion's initial successes. Mortals and creatures without a Legend rating have no defense and are automatically misled.

UNLIKELY PATTERN (CHAOS ••••• •••)

Dice Pool: Wits + Craft
Cost: 1 Willpower + 10 Legend

The God picks up a series of items, then throws them up into the air. When they land, they amazingly come together in the form desired by the God or in a position that the God wishes. The difficulty of this trick depends on the number of items used and the complexity of the final item. Use the accompanying table as a guideline.

Not every item created in this fashion comes out quite right. If the player scored an even number of successes,

the object functions as desired. If the player scored an odd number of successes, the item has some sort of quirk, flaw or dramatically-appropriate hindrance.

Normally, an item created in this fashion falls into its component parts at the end of the scene. If the player spends a permanent *dot* of Willpower, the object remains permanent. This expenditure must come before the God knows whether or not the item is flawed, though.

Items	Outcome	Difficulty
Wooden blocks	Stack of blocks	3
Coins	All land on heads	5
Aluminum pipes, rubber tubes, chain	Bicycle	10
Coins	All land on edge	15
Flour, milk, and eggs	Cake	20
Steel grommets, plastic sheeting, plate glass, screws	Car	25
Dark matter	Pocket universe	50

DARKNESS

AFRAID OF THE DARK (DARKNESS ••)

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Empathy
Cost: 1 Legend

The Scion causes a momentary darkness to pass before the eyes of a target. For a single instant, the subject sees everything cast in shadow, with frightening overtones and hideous, nightmarish contortions. This brief second of doubt shakes the target, causing her to lose a single point of Willpower.

Afraid of the Dark has no effect on a character with a higher Legend rating than the user. Against someone with an equal or lower Legend score, the defender's player rolls (Willpower + Integrity + Legend) to shake off the effect.

ABSORB LIGHT (DARKNESS ••••)

Dice Pool: None
Cost: 2 Legend

The Scion's body turns pitch-black, and he becomes a sinkhole for light. Radiated light becomes absorbed when it strikes the Scion's body, leaving him as a vaguely humanoid-shaped black blot (though still quite solid). In darkness or shadow, the demigod blends in almost perfectly — he's just a little *too* dark, which makes him stand out a bit from the "mundane" darkness around him. Nevertheless, the Scion gains a bonus equal to the character's Legend score on all Stealth tests while the power is active.

Furthermore, because the demigod absorbs all light without harm, the Scion becomes immune to any damage or blinding effect from the Sun Purview when it's created by anyone with a lower Legend score than his own. The Scion also absorbs radiation from the infrared spectrum all the way up to cosmic rays with no effect on him, meaning that the Scion could literally survive in the nuclear fallout after the explosion of an atomic weapon (although the force during such an explosion could still be fatal).

Absorb Light lasts for one scene.

DEATH

DELAY ROT (DEATH •)

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Medicine
Cost: 1 Legend

With a brief touch and the expenditure of one point of Legend, the Scion causes a subject to cease rotting and become completely preserved against decay. The item in question is immune for a number of days equal to the threshold successes scored by the player on the (Intelligence + Medicine) roll. Scions using the Death Purview extensively find this Boon extremely handy in keeping their various cadaverous "friends" fresh and crisp.

Delay Rot can be re-applied to a corpse (or vegetable, food item or other object susceptible to rot) with another activation. Once the power expires, potential putrefaction proceeds as normal; the target does not suddenly "catch up" with the elapsed time.

DEATH OF THE SOUL (DEATH ••••• •••••)

Dice Pool: Strength + Occult
Cost: 1 Willpower + 20 Legend

The God indicates a single divine target within line of sight, then severs that target from its connection to divinity. If the God's player succeeds on a (Strength + Occult) roll against the target's (Willpower + Integrity + Legend), then the subject immediately loses all divine power, in effect becoming a normal mortal. Epic Attributes, Knacks and Boons become unusable. Legend points are temporarily inaccessible. The subject caps out at a rating of 5 dots in any Abilities, and rounds down on all fractions.

Death of the Soul lasts for ten ticks. It does not function on a God that is currently in Avatar form, nor does it affect Titans (although it can affect a Titan's avatar).

EARTH

RUST/SHINE (EARTH ••••)

Dice Pool: None
Cost: 2 Legend

With a pass of the hand, the Scion causes a coating of rust or oxidization to form on a metallic object or conversely removes such a coating, restoring an item to its untarnished form. A rusted metal object loses durability and functionality. Its Hardness decreases to half normal, and if the object is a precision item (like a

gun), it has a 50% chance to malfunction any time it's used. Restoring a rusted item to its original state wipes away all traces of age and even reverses the effects, so that a wholly rusted-out car body (for instance) would be as good as new. The rusted parts don't just disappear, they reverse the process and become solid metal again.

Invoking this power on an item requires the Scion to physically touch or manipulate the object, and it has no effect on metals that don't rust (such as gold) or upon Relics.

IMPRISONING CRYSTAL (EARTH ••••• ••)

Dice Pool: Strength + Craft

Cost: 5 Legend, +1 Legend per Legend dot of the target

A massive shard of crystal coalesces around the Scion's target. If the player's (Strength + Craft) roll bests the opponent's (Strength + Fortitude + Legend), then the opponent becomes encased in a clear, translucent, many-faceted shard of crystal. This prison holds the opponent in place but also renders it immune to physical attack. Unless something manages to penetrate the crystal, the occupant, in stasis, remains unaffected. The crystal has a Hardness equal to the successes in excess of the opponent's roll that are scored on the activation of the power. If any single attack manages to penetrate the crystal, it shatters and prematurely releases its occupant, although this does not cause any damage to the imprisoned creature.

A Scion could also use this power to temporarily place a friend in stasis, perhaps to prevent the progress of a disease or persistent injury. While encased, the subject does not age, breathe or suffer from any ongoing conditions.

Normally, an imprisoning crystal lasts for one scene, after which time it shatters into pieces that fade away as quickly as they appeared. If the conjuring Scion's player chooses to spend a permanent Willpower dot, then the crystal instead remains for one day per success scored over the opponent's roll times the conjurer's Legend score.

FERTILITY

TOXIC THORN (FERTILITY ••)

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Science

Cost: 1 Legend

The Scion sprouts a single thorn from his hand or foot, which he can use in conjunction with an unarmed strike to poison a victim. Successes scored by the player on an (Intelligence + Science) roll determines the strength of the poison that can be created. Consult the accompanying table for its toxicity:

Feature	Difficulty
Tolerance	
Stamina + Fortitude	+0
Stamina	+3
None	+5
Damage	
Per level	+1
Bashing	+0
Lethal	+10
Aggravated	+20
Per day	+0
Per hour	+3
Per minute	+5
Per action	+10
Toxicity	
Per point	+2
Penalty	
Per point	+2

Once the Scion grows a particular poisonous thorn, it remains for the rest of the scene or until he chooses to shed it. Note that an unarmed attack that does not inflict damage also does not inject poison (it was blocked, dodged or absorbed by armor).

GREENSKIN (FERTILITY •••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 2 Legend

With a moment's thought, the Scion reflects upon the characteristics of the green, growing world. She then internalizes those characteristics, granting herself some of the features of a plant.

While the Scion doesn't become completely suffused with plant-like characteristics, she does develop a noticeable greenish tint to her skin and hair. Her flesh becomes woody and slightly tough, which grants her one extra level of soak against lethal and bashing damage. She also gains the ability to draw sustenance by photosynthesis. So long as she garners at least four hours of sunlight in a day, she obviates her need for food completely. (While her body might still require a few trace elements, they are so negligible as to be ignored). Lastly, her blood becomes thick and sticky, completely mitigating any bleeding that might happen as a result of wounds; her injuries cover over in a translucent amber almost immediately. Greenskin lasts for a number of scenes equal to the Scion's Legend, or until the Scion chooses to cancel the effect.

FIRE

FLAMIN' BULLETS (FIRE ••••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 Legend per scene

The Scion reaches into a source of flame — anything from a candle to a bonfire will do — and then "loads" that fire into a projectile weapon. The weapon becomes wreathed in flames, and for the rest of the scene, the weapon belches blasts of Legend-fueled fire. The weapon still consumes normal ammunition, but the shots become imbued with "fire power," so to speak. The fiery rounds also inflict lethal damage, even against creatures that normally take bashing damage from bullets, such as the walking dead. The fiery rounds add +1 Accuracy and Damage to the weapon and also allow it to light targets on fire. Shooting the gas tank of a car with a pistol really *can* produce an explosive ending when Flamin' Bullets are used.

In spite of the moniker, this Boon also functions on missile weapons besides guns. Anything that fires a projectile is fair game: bow, cho-ku-no, atlatl, sling, blowgun and so on. The effect is the same: Otherwise mundane ammunition becomes wreathed in fire and gains the bonuses to Accuracy and Damage.

While the Scion can choose to place this Boon on weapons other than his own, a wielder who doesn't have Fire Immunity (Fire •) risks burning himself just by holding an imbued weapon. The weapons augmented by this power do not suffer any damage, though.

Fiery ammunition burns into black smoke and ash after it strikes a target, so there's also no evidence left behind — aside from the wounds, which look like they were inflicted by superheated versions of the weapon in question.

Although the ammunition created by this Boon is fiery, it also has some degree of corporeal substance. As a result, it still inflicts damage on creatures that are immune to fire, although it does not gain the bonus to Accuracy and Damage against such targets.

HOTTER THAN HOT (FIRE ••••• ••••)

Dice Pool: Wits + Control

Cost: 5 Legend

When a God of Fire decides to turn up the heat, it's time to get out of the kitchen — things are going to get *really* hot. Invoking the Hotter than Hot Boon amplifies the mystical force that powers a God's Fire Boons. For the rest of the scene, any time the God uses a Fire Boon, it automatically trumps the simple Fire Immunity (Fire •) Boon. While many advanced powers can overcome the immunity of beings with lower Legend ratings, a power enhanced with Hotter than Hot suffers no such limitation: It cuts right though fire resistance like it's not there. In fact, the supercharged flames that a God wields in conjunction with this Boon are so deadly, they can injure or kill creatures that are made entirely of fire. Whether it's another Scion in Devil Body form or an Ifrit, fire elemental or salamander, beings that normally enjoy total protection from fire now realize what "scorching" really means.

When the God invokes this Boon, the player rolls (Wits + Control). Anyone subsequently targeted by the God must score more successes on a (Stamina + Fortitude + Legend) roll or have its resistance to fire completely trumped. This trumping effect applies only to powers used by the God who invoked Hotter than Hot: The creature's fire resistance (if any) functions normally against other peoples' effects unless they, too, have this Boon. This Boon's effects last for a single scene.

GUARDIAN

WARNING LINE (GUARDIAN •)

Dice Pool: Perception + Awareness

Cost: 1 Legend

The Scion traces a line across the ground, along a doorway or over some other opening. The line can be as long as the Scion wishes to make it, so long as she traces the entire line in one pass. At the end, she names a creature. This can be as specific or as general as she wishes: "titanspawn," "mortals," "any animal smaller than a rat" and "Kane Taoka" are all valid examples. If a creature of that sort crosses the line, the Scion immediately becomes aware of it.

There's no limit to the number of Warning Lines that a Scion can have drawn at once, and she can intuitively tell the difference between any of them. (That is, if she has three different Warning Lines active, she knows which one was tripped at any given time). A Warning Line remains effective for a number of days equal to the player's activation roll.

WATCHER AT THE THRESHOLD (GUARDIAN ••••• •)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 5 Legend

Prerequisite Boon: Vigil Brand (**Scion: Hero**, pp. 143-144)

By marking a series of portals or passageways with his Vigil Brand, the Scion becomes capable of instantly transporting between any of them. The Scion can only appear at a given portal when another being attempts to pass through it, though. If a creature makes an effort to enter a passageway,

the Scion can check on it through his Vigil Brand and then decide whether he wishes to respond by transporting to the spot.

Watcher at the Threshold functions for any Vigil Brand that the Scion lays at an area that could be considered a threshold — a doorway, gate, bridge, intersection, window or even a hole in the ground.

HEALTH

BOLSTER (HEALTH ••)

Dice Pool: Stamina + Medicine

Cost: 1 Legend

The Scion speaks a few heartening words and waves his Relic or activates the pressure points and meridians on a series of targets. The Scion spends one Legend point and her player rolls (Stamina + Medicine). For each success scored, one target gains one temporary health level. This bonus health level lasts for the remainder of the scene. When the health level disappears, any wounds that filled it also subside; it does not overflow into normal damage.

ANTIDOTE (HEALTH •••)

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Medicine

Cost: 1 Legend

A quick purging of the subject's system forces poisons and diseases away. Any mundane toxin or common disease instantly disappears from the subject, although the leftover damage, crippling, scarring or similar symptoms remain unless cured with other powers. Magical diseases, titanspawn venoms and the poisons inflicted by powerful Relics might be purged. The player must score more successes on the activation roll than the original poisoner inflicted. For poisons or diseases that weren't created via a power with an activation roll, the player must roll more successes than the poison's Toxicity.

JUSTICE

GUILT OF THE DAMNED (JUSTICE •••)

Dice Pool: Perception + Empathy

Cost: 1 Legend

The Scion calls out one of the failings of a foe while striking him, and then spends the requisite Legend point. If the subject has a lower Legend score than the attacking Scion, the power functions automatically; otherwise, the player rolls (Perception + Empathy) against the opponent's (Willpower + Integrity + Legend). If the power succeeds, the enemy becomes wracked with guilt at its lack of integrity and questions its ability to uphold the high standards of Virtue that it considers important. (A titanspawn might instead become uncertain of its ability to wreak havoc and lose confidence in its ability to overcome the Scion). These feelings of inferiority reduce all of the target's Virtue ratings by one dot for the rest of the scene. A target can only be subjected to this Boon once per scene, although a Scion can choose to use it against multiple different opponents.

STAR CHAMBER (JUSTICE ••••• ••)

Dice Pool: Charisma + Politics

Cost: 3 Legend, +1 Legend per Legend dot of the target

Crying out for justice, the Scion calls out to Fate to balance the universal scales. The subject's Fate becomes twisted by the demands of justice, and Fate conspires to see that the target is punished for the sins that it commits.

The actual execution of such punishment can be convoluted indeed. While it's unlikely that a burning helicopter will suddenly crash upon the target (although it's possible), a subject will find that every minor infraction and past misdeed comes back to haunt him. A hardened criminal with many years of treachery behind him will discover that his own possessions are stolen, his family and friends become subjected to investigations by the police, old evidence turns up against him and cold cases suddenly become hot again due to testimony of witnesses who previously disappeared. Every time he tries to flee persecution, something snarls his attempts and causes him even more grief. If, for example, he buys a plane ticket, he discovers that his flight from prosecution has added federal charges. If he tries to lie low in a hide-out, he finds that his bad luck has all of his former friends turning him out on the street.

The severity of the curses levied upon a lawbreaker is proportionate to the magnitude, frequency and supernatural potency of the criminal's actions. A bad neighbor who yells at other tenants and kicks the sweet old lady's dog may discover that his walls have become full of mold and he has developed corns on his feet. A powerful titanspawn that rampages across a town, enslaves the people and devours human sacrifices will almost certainly find a Band of Scions drawn inexorably into its lap to destroy it.

The judgment of Fate in this matter is invisible and intangible, but any magical means to look at the character's misfortune will reveal the power of the Star Chamber. The criminal has taken on karmic justice, and the stars themselves will see it fulfilled.

Star Chamber only functions on a creature with a higher Legend rating than the Scion if the player scores more successes on the activation roll than the subject's (Willpower + Integrity + Legend) roll.

MOON

SILVER BLESSING (MOON ••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 Legend

With a breath of cool air, the Scion causes a single item to take on a glittering, silvery sheen. For the rest of the Scene, the item has all of the supernatural properties of silver. While silver does tnot have any *inherent* special qualities for most Scions, it can be effective as a weapon against certain theriamorphs (were-creatures) and undead. Silver also features prominently in some kinds of magic. An item affected by Silver Blessing loses none of its native properties, but gains all the benefits of pure silver for the rest of the scene.

MIRROR OF LUNACY (MOON •••••)

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Empathy

Cost: 2 Legend + 1 Willpower

The Scion holds up a reflective surface to another Scion who is in the throes of a Virtue extremity, then utters a cryptic phrase of advice or a soothing balm for the troubled subject. After spending the appropriate Legend and Willpower, the Scion's player rolls (Manipulation + Empathy) against the target's (Willpower + Integrity + Legend). If the player invoking Mirror of Lunacy scores more successes, then the Boon takes hold: The targeted Scion sees himself in the reflection and suddenly realizes the extent of his madness. This causes the subject to immediately snap out of his Virtue extremity, although it does not necessarily prevent him from taking other rash actions in order to "set right" any mistakes that he may have made during that time. The Scion cannot use this Boon on herself, and it can be used only once per story.

PSYCHOPOMP

SPIRIT LAMP (PSYCHOPOMP ••••)

Dice Pool: Charisma + Occult

Cost: 2 Legend

The Scion tunes up her mystic resonance and unleashes her Legend energy to become a beacon to ghosts, spirits and strange wandering energies. For a range of miles equal to the threshold successes times the Scion's Legend, she stands out to everything in the spirit world. Spirits come and cluster around her, and ghosts seek out the Scion for guidance. While the Scion

may not necessarily have any special control over ghosts (that's the function of the Death Purview) nor does the power compel the attendance of spirits (also a function of the Death Purview), her role as a Psychopomp becomes clear: Any spirit can tell with a glance that the Scion serves as an intermediary between the World and other realms, with the power to guide people on their journeys. Spirits and ghosts that see the Scion's radiance can choose how to respond, but the Scion's glow is clearly visible to them, even through barriers.

Better still, if the Scion happens to be in the Underworld, her radiance is visible to everyone there, including herself, although its range drops to feet instead of miles. Anyone in the Scion's radiance in the Underworld gains a bonus equal to the Scion's Legend rating on any roll to notice hazards or pitfalls and to avoid the deleterious effects of hanging out in the land of the dead, such as the gray leaching effect that mythically strikes inhabitants of Hades. Thus, the Scion can serve as a guide for her Band, illuminating the way through the Underworld and helping them to avoid the pitfalls therein.

Spirit Lamp may provide a bonus equal to the user's Legend score on tests of Virtue and rolls to perceive features of the Underworld. The Storyteller has final say on what elements of the Underworld are sufficiently onerous to deserve such cases, as opposed to areas where the demands of the story place a puzzle outside of the benefits of this power.

HEART OF THE MAZE (PSYCHOPOMP ••••• •)

Dice Pool: Charisma + Presence

Cost: 3 Legend, +3 Legend per additional scene (see below)

The demigod need only handle an item somehow connected to a particular person and picture that person in his mind. He then invokes Heart of the Maze, and the player marks off 3 Legend and rolls (Charisma + Presence). The demigod's image suddenly appears within the mind of the chosen target, along with intuitive knowledge of how to reach the demigod from wherever the target is located. The instructions to reach the demigod are clear and automatically update as the subject changes location, always in a set of directions that the subject could conceivably complete.

Heart of the Maze has a maximum range of 100 miles times the successes scored times the Scion's Legend. The player must score at least 15 successes in order to use this power across the boundaries of the World to another place, such as the Overworld or a Touchstone. The directions remain in the target's mind for the rest of the scene, although the duration can be extended if the Scion's player expends another 3 Legend points per additional scene. If the Scion or the subject moves out of the range of the power, it ends immediately. Note also that Heart of the Maze in no way compels the subject to come to the Scion; it simply provides directions.

SKY

WEATHER WITCH (SKY •)

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Science

Cost: 1 Legend

By tasting the wind, putting a finger up in the air or testing the feel of her joints, the Scion gains the ability to predict the vagaries of natural weather. Her prediction is good up to a number of days in advance equal to the successes scored by her player on the initial (Intelligence + Science) roll. This doesn't account for changes introduced by more powerful uses of the Sky Purview or by Titans and titanspawn.

Weather Witch functions for an area up to one mile on a side times the square of the Scion's Legend — that is, a Hero with a Legend of 1 could predict for an area one mile square, while a God with a Legend of 12 could predict for an area 144 miles on a side (20,736 square miles). The Scion must be able to see the area, although she can perceive it through a camera, television, telescope or other remote means as long as what she's seeing is current and up-to-date.

Furthermore, while within an area for which she has predicted the weather, the Scion suffers no penalties from natural weather phenomena any less than a hurricane or thunderstorm. High winds and sleeting rain don't bother her or penalize any of her actions. Lightning strikes can still hurt her, as can heavy objects tossed around by those high winds, as well as supernatural powers that influence the weather.

DIVINE THRENODY (SKY ••••)

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Art

Cost: 2 Legend

An oft-overlooked element of the Sky Purview is the fact that air carries sound. The most graphic example of this is thunder, which is commonly associated with sky gods; wind, too, is said to howl or moan, as if the sky itself has a voice. A demigod who delves into the nature of thunder and sound can learn to manipulate the currents of air that carry sound and thereby enhance or dampen sonic effects.

With a simple use of Divine Threnody, the Scion can dampen sound. Voices become muffled, footsteps recede into the distance and even cars and airplanes seem to emit almost no noise whatsoever. The Scion dampens sound in an area equal to her player's threshold successes on a roll of (Intelligence + Art) times the demigod's Legend rating, in feet on a side.

Thus, with six successes and a Legend of six, the demigod dampens sound in an area up to thirty-six feet on a side. Within that area, Stealth checks gain a bonus equal to the demigod's Legend rating and noise becomes extremely suppressed or eliminated altogether. People must shout just to hear each other, and sound deadens and becomes unable to carry beyond arm's length. Such a dampening lasts for a number of ticks equal to the successes scored on the effect.

If the Scion amplifies sound, she can create a crack of thunder or sonic boom. Her player's threshold successes determine the intensity of the noise, although she must have an initial source sound to amplify (such as her own voice). While this scream does not inflict damage, it can inflict knockback or knockdown as if it had scored damage equal to the threshold successes (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 198). Furthermore, anyone who suffers knockdown from it — that is, anyone whose (Stamina + Fortitude) total is less than the Scion's threshold successes — is temporarily deafened for a number of turns equal to the difference in successes [the screamer's (Intelligence + Art) roll minus the victim's (Stamina + Fortitude)]. This blast of sound forms a tight beam that emanates from the Scion and strikes a single target.

Divine Threnody also has an additional use for a Scion who understands music. So long as the Scion has at least Art ••• (with any form of music or oratory specialty), she can use Divine Threnody to create voices on the wind. The wind can moan, howl, sing or carry messages, as desired. This application has a maximum range of miles equal to the user's threshold successes times Legend. The Scion can carry a song, message or voice this way to a maximum number of people equal to her Legend rating. Any power that could be invoked via the power of the Scion's voice can also be invoked at a distance with Divine Threnody, so long as the Scion's player pays the requisite cost, but the dice pool for the follow-up power is limited to the threshold successes scored to activate Divine Threnody. Note that while the Divine Threnody might carry a message to several people simultaneously, everyone hears the same message, and voice-activated powers that affect only a limited number of targets might not affect everyone (though the Scion can choose whom to affect).

Divine Threnody does not function in any location without air, be it underwater or in a vacuum.

SUN

LIFE-GIVING RAYS (SUN •••)

Dice Pool: Charisma + Medicine
Cost: 1 Legend

A soft, golden glow emanates from the Scion, just bright enough to read by. While bathed in this golden light, living beings heal more rapidly than normal. All healing times (**Scion: Hero**, p. 196-7) are halved after an hour of being within the Scion's refreshing light, including for the Scion herself. Life-Giving Rays function for a maximum number of people equal to the Scion's Legend rating plus her player's successes on the initial (Charisma + Medicine) roll, and remains in effect for a number of hours equal to the player's original threshold successes. If a target whose healing rate is halved takes any new damage of any kind, their healing time for all their wounds returns to normal.

FUSION (SUN ••••• •••••)

Dice Pool: Strength + Science
Cost: 10 Legend + 1 Willpower

The Scion generates an incredible internal kiln that releases tremendous amounts of energy. A shimmering halo of heat surrounds him as his body crackles with power. As long as this inner fusion reaction continues, the God is capable of absorbing matter, transforming it into newer, denser material and releasing energy simultaneously.

To fuel the Godly furnace, the God must grasp matter. The material may be solid, liquid or gaseous: Anything can become part of the solar process. Even magical items or people can be absorbed, if the God can grab them away or clinch them. The God then presses the item or creature in between his hands and exerts tremendous pressure and heat, using the power of the Sun to create fusion.

Converting an item via Fusion requires the God's attention, so after absorbing the item, the God must perform a miscellaneous action to complete the process. At the end, the object is destroyed and converted into newer, denser matter and energy. The resultant matter is drawn forth by the God, who separates his hands to reveal a glowing white light that quickly fades into the resultant matter. While this new matter cannot be a manufactured item — it emerges as little more than lumps of raw material — it can be nearly any element or compound possible. The process of fusion allows the God to compact material into gold, uranium or other elements, or to selectively pare off specific light matter (such as helium) and release that matter instead. In addition, the process of fusion generates a tremendous amount of energy, which the God can either radiate with the intensity of sunlight for a full 24 hours or release in a sudden surge of heat and light (just like the Divine Radiance Boon on p. 147-148 of **Scion: Hero**).

Fusion performed on a creature that the God has clinched after a successful grapple (**Scion: Hero**, p. 200) inflicts a base of 7 levels of aggravated damage plus the successes on a (Strength + Science) roll by the God's player. A creature that survives Fusion is

ejected from the God's grasp (smoking and perhaps a bit crispy, but otherwise reasonably intact), and the God does not derive any composite materials. As with other Sun Boons, Fire Immunity (Fire •) doesn't protect against this power.

Once a God has performed Fusion on a target, the power is complete. A God may only perform Fusion on an item or creature (or part thereof) that the God could fit between his hands. Of course, a God who can assume a larger form can benefit from a wider range of consumables.

WAR

MORTAL STROKE (WAR •••••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 Legend + 1 Willpower per weapon

The Scion touches one or several weapons and invokes the power of her Legend to grant them supernatural killing power. For each point of Legend and Willpower spent, the Scion's player can choose to affect one weapon. Each weapon blessed with Mortal Stroke inflicts aggravated damage on its next attack.

Mortal Stroke can enchant missile weapons such as guns or spears, but not individual ammunition — that is, a quiver of javelins could each be individually enchanted (since each one is thrown separately and without the aid of another device), but a gun or atlatl enchanted this way would grant the bonus only to the first shot that it makes.

A missed attack does not use up a Mortal Stroke; the weapon retains the power until it either scores a hit or the scene ends.

SIEGE JUGGERNAUT (WAR ••••• ••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 10 Legend

Overcoming enemy defenses means inflicting damage that can penetrate their walls, fortresses and terrain. For a demigod, the usual way to do so is to blast right through them, a power epitomized by this Boon. When a demigod invokes the Siege Juggernaut Boon, she becomes capable of using her normal weapons (or even unarmed attacks) as artillery. To the onlooker, no change is visible until the Scion lashes out. When she strikes, though, her weapon becomes suffused with a massive aura of divine energy and appears as a giant, illuminated version of the usual strike. This tremendous blast of power can smash down walls, rend the landscape and sweep away fortifications with ease.

While under the effects of Siege Juggernaut, the demigod's attacks can lash out to a distance of five feet per dot of Legend. When the Scion strikes against an object such as a barricade or tank, her scything energy aura inflicts +10 dice of damage and halves the Hardness of the object. Against creatures or people, the massive attacks grant a +5 bonus to the damage inflicted and automatically cause knockback (**Scion: Hero**, p. 198). This Boon's effects last for a single scene.

WATER

POTABILITY (WATER •)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 Legend

For Scions who lack the means to use Purify Water (**Scion: God**, p. 103), the Potability Boon is a simple substitute. Potability allows the Scion to touch one source of water no larger than a bathtub and cause any liquid in it to become safe to drink. While various contaminants may remain, including living beings, the water will not be poisonous or disease-laden. It might be brown, it might have algae floating on top, and it might taste like dirt mixed with baking soda, but it'll quench thirst and function for irrigation, if necessary.

The Potability Boon does not guarantee that water will remain in a pure state. If used on a body of water too large to cleanse, the Boon simply fails. It doesn't allow the Scion to purify water in several steps, unless the Scion chooses to physically remove some of the water into a container and then make it drinkable. Water rendered potable can readily mix with other substances.

DROWN (WATER •••••)

Dice Pool: Dexterity + Science

Cost: 1 Legend + 1 Willpower

With a soft caress, the Scion causes the target's lungs to start filling with fluid. Over the course of several ticks, the target drowns on this viscous internal flood until it either fights off the demigod's power or collapses in a heap.

The Scion must touch a creature's bare skin to start the drowning process (which could be part of an unarmed strike). Every three ticks thereafter, the subject suffers one level of bashing damage unless its player bests the Scion's activation roll with a (Stamina + Fortitude + Legend) roll. This power concludes once the target beats the Scion's activation roll or dies. For ease of reference, you may wish to place a special token or slip of paper on your battlewheel, if you use one, so that you can update it every third tick.

This Boon has no effect on creatures that don't have lungs, that breathe water naturally or that don't have to breathe. Scions with the Water Breathing (Water •) Boon must still spend one miscellaneous action to shift their breathing to water, unless they were already submerged.

NEW SPELLS

Scions who use the Magic Purview rely on trying to twist the threads of Fate to their advantage. Of course, such manipulations are not without their own inherent risk. Every tug at the skein of Fate entangles the Scion further in a mesh not of her own design. Ultimately, the use of Magic may bind its wielder inevitably to the very Fate that she had hoped to avoid. Not that this stops Scions from trying to find new ways to cheat the designs of Fate — or from creating new spells to flex their will.

The new spells presented here function just like the other spells of the Magic Purview: Scions can learn them and cast them without any special difficulties, aside from the usual experience, rolls, costs and Fatebindings. Scions who do more than dabble may also choose to make their own spells. Such undertakings form the basis of a great story. The Scion can quest for secrets from the Gods of knowledge, learn from mysterious hidden libraries and experiment with stolen Relics and trophies in order to refine her work. In general, creating a spell is not an undertaking for an afternoon in the garden.

A new spell follows three simple steps: First, the player designs the spell, writes down its intent and proposes a dice pool and cost. Next, the Storyteller determines the necessary components and research to complete the spell, if it seems agreeable, and makes any changes to the rules in order to help the spell fit thematically and mechanically into the game. Finally, the Storyteller sets the research difficulty for the player's extended (Intelligence + Occult) test to puzzle out the final spell formula. Once all of these steps are completed, the player can spend experience points to learn the new spell. Of course, just because a spell was approved doesn't mean that it will always work. A spell that winds up twisting around the story too much may suddenly cease to function as Fate intervenes to protect the tapestry of the future.

MEASURED FOE (•)

Dice Pool: Perception + Empathy

Cost: 1 Legend

A glance at the threads about a particular person can tell much of that person's capabilities, his weaknesses and the way that he handles problems. With a successful casting of this spell, the magician learns the subject's highest-level Purview or Epic Attribute. Each additional success scored on the casting roll grants knowledge of the next lower Purview or Epic Attribute. If the subject has multiple abilities at the same level, the Storyteller randomly chooses which ones the caster learns. Note that this spell does not indicate the *lack* of a particular Purview or Epic Attribute: It simply indicates which ones the target has, starting with the target's strongest (most defining) powers and proceeding to the weakest.

LEGENDARY SURGE (••)

Dice Pool: Wits + Empathy

Cost: 1 or more Legend

By using a thread of Fate as a conduit, the magician gifts a target with some of his own Legendary energy. For each success scored on the activation roll, the caster can transfer one point of his Legend to the subject. Casting the spell consumes 1 Legend point, and the caster can then send over any amount of Legend, up to the limit of his own remaining pool. The subject doesn't have to be willing, but excess Legend points (any that would go over the subject's maximum) are lost.

TUGGING HEARTSTRINGS (•••)

Dice Pool: Charisma + Presence

Cost: 1 or more Legend

The caster measures the Fatebinding between two people — possibly including herself — and pulls on the thread to draw them closer. This dangerous spell actually intensifies a Fatebinding. Every two successes scored on the (Charisma + Presence) roll increases the strength of the Fatebinding by one step. Of course, the caster also becomes Fatebound to *both* subjects, if she wasn't one of the initial targets.

Note that the caster must know that a Fatebinding exists. This is relatively trivial, though, if she also has the spell The Unlidded Eye (**Scion: Hero**, p. 154).

Casting this spell costs a total number of Legend points equal to the Legend score of both targets added together (with a minimum of one, such as in the case of strengthening a binding between two normal mortals).

BOUND SPIRIT (••••)

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Occult

Cost: 1 or more Legend

The magician utters a potent curse, loops the target's thread of Fate around a particular location and pulls it taut. The thread passes (metaphysically) through the target's body and anchors her spirit at that location. Against a target with a lower Legend score, there is no defense; targets with equal or higher Legend scores can resist with (Willpower + Integrity + Legend). If the spell succeeds, the target's soul is

anchored to the particular place. While she can still leave and move about as normal, upon her death her soul becomes a ghost locked into inhabiting the location. Powerful users of the Death or Psychopomp Purviews might be able to free her, but otherwise she can only escape if the caster releases her or some pre-stated condition comes to pass, no matter how ludicrous. The trapped spirit knows what condition will free her and likely goes to great pains to beg those who come near to find a way to fulfill those conditions and free her.

SANCTIFY BAND (•••••)

Dice Pool: Charisma + Presence

Cost: 1 Willpower + 1 Legend per person

Some Scions use ritual and ceremony to create a deliberate bond between their members. This magical rite, performed by sharing a meal, a cup of wine or some other joining act, creates a mystical connection between all of the members of a Band.

For each success on the activation roll, the spellcaster can affect one member. Everyone who is brought into the sanctified Band gains the ability to share Willpower points with other members of the Band. A member can voluntarily choose to give one Willpower point to any other member of the Band at any time as a reflexive action; during combat, however, it must be on a tick the donor is able to act on.

This spell only affects willing participants, and only functions on people or creatures with a Legend score. Every subject of the spell also garners a minor (level one) Fatebinding to every other member of the same Band.

MEDDLESOME FATES (••••• •)

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Command

Cost: 1 Willpower + 5 Legend

The magician must have access to the subjects of this spell or some intimate (Fateful) possession of each. Once cast, the spell creates a new Fatebinding between the two targets. The magician can choose the nature of the binding: For instance, she might designate one of the subjects the recipient and the other the Lover, the Catastrophe, the Nemesis or any other role. She is also not bound to tell either party of the roles that she chooses. In fact, the subjects might not even be aware of the Fatebinding unless they are present when the magician casts the spell (or use their own Magic to see the new thread).

Every two successes scored on this spell creates one level of Fatebinding between the two targets. The magician also gains a Fatebinding to both targets as usual.

TRANSIENT VISITATION (••••• ••)

Dice Pool: Charisma + Presence

Cost: 1 Willpower + 5 Legend

Some Gods are just too busy to Visit all of their offspring, or they are stuck in some unfortunate part of the Underworld and can't get out. By means of this spell, the caster arranges to Visit her child via the world of dreams. When the subject next goes to sleep, the caster appears vividly in a dream and can inform the subject of whatever she pleases. The subject remembers the dream clearly and gains all the benefits of an actual Visitation; granted Relics, Creatures and the like appear to the offspring

through coincidence and happenstance. Because the Visitation was a projected image, though, the God does not actually have to travel to the Scion and does not risk bringing titanspawn in her wake (or getting killed during the trip).

STEAL BIRTHRIGHT (••••• •••)

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Stealth

Cost: 1 Legend per point of Birthright + 1 Legend per object or being

Through a convoluted switching of threads in the skein of Fate, the God arranges to temporarily steal away one of the Birthrights of some other Scion. The cost to do so is 1 Legend per dot of the Birthright, plus 1 additional Legend point per object or creature that makes up the Birthright in question. (See Birthright Bond on pp. 110-111 of **Scion: God** for the mechanics of granting a Birthright in the first place.) The spellcaster's player must score a number of successes equal to the Legend point cost of the spell, or else the spell fails.

If the theft succeeds, then the God gains use of the stolen Birthright for a number of days equal to the God's Manipulation rating. Alternatively, the God could choose to gift the stolen Birthright to any other creature to which the God has a Fatebinding, such as one of his own children. Either way, the Scion who lost the Birthright finds its powers completely inaccessible until the spell is unwoven or has run its course.

Each casting of the spell can only steal one Birthright at a time. That is, five spartoi could be stolen by one casting (because they are all part of one Followers • • • Birthright), but not five spartoi and a tarnhelm.

HEART OF MINE (••••• ••••)

Dice Pool: Stamina + Empathy

Cost: 1 Willpower + 10 Legend

The magician tangles up her own threads of Fate so securely with the victim that the two become thoroughly enmeshed. For a number of days equal to the successes scored on the activation roll, both parties share the same Fatebindings. Furthermore, if either one dies, the other target also immediately dies. (A particularly vindictive God could even invoke this spell and then kill herself to ensure the murder of a hated foe! Worse still, a God with Ultimate Stamina (see **Scion: God**, p. 67) could survive such a trick....) This spell does not function on anyone with a higher Legend score than the caster.

MAGICAL PURGE (••••• •••••)

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Occult

Cost: 1 Willpower + 15 Legend

With a cutting motion that snaps some of the threads on Fate's loom, the God literally tears the skein of Fate and destroys the ability of other magicians to warm the loom. The God chooses one target, and the God's player rolls (Intelligence + Occult). Whenever the target attempts to cast a spell, the victim must amass more successes on the activation roll than the God. Otherwise, the spell fails completely with no effect, but at least the Legend (and possibly Willpower) are not spent.

Magical Purge remains in effect for a number of hours equal to the invoking God's (Intelligence x Legend). A God can only invoke a Magical Purge against one target at a time — holding Fate in abeyance like this taxes even the powers of the greatest Gods. Also, Fate has a tendency to look unkindly on this sort of wanton meddling, and Gods who use this spell often find that their own plans become rather convoluted and twisted for some time afterward.

CELESTIAL BUREAUCRACY

PART THREE

Celestial Bureaucracy
Division: 0689
Classification: G19
Report #: 00798673-4139A

Two unconscious Chaos Cultists flew through the temple doors before plummeting and landing at the green-robed master's feet. Tommy Li stepped through the hole they left and announced, "Emerald Duke of Toads, your evil schemes are at an end!" None of the cultists massed below paid any attention to Tan as he sidled along the mezzanine above Tommy, gun in one hand, looking for a junction box.

"I should have known those gunmen couldn't kill you," hissed the Duke, his voice slightly muffled by his emerald mask. "But you are wrong, Tommy Li. You have come to your end, through the power of Hundun and the Devil-Scream Portal!" A huge device resembling an upright sarcophagus stood before the huge, faceless image of Hundun, the titan of Chaos. Eight slender, glittering legs radiated from the sarcophagus like a spider's legs, while spiraling glass tubes ran up its sides.

The traitorous Scion seized the nearest cultist and slammed him into the open sarcophagus. The man wailed as the device's arms snapped shut. They pierced his body and started to pump quicksilver into his body. The tubes along the device glowed yellow-green and violet, and the cultist's wail rose into a shrill scream.

Tan glanced down as the scream abruptly choked off. Two clawed hands, the pale yellow hue of bone, reached out of the cultist's mouth, gripped his cheeks and stretched... and stretched.... Tan winced and shut his eyes as the demon struggled out of the impossibly distended mouth, leaving a bag of torn and bloody skin to flop at the base of the device. In a rustle of green robes, all the remaining cultists dropped to the floor and prostrated themselves before this vile miracle.

Maybe it was just the clashing hues of the temple's neon lights that made Tommy look pale and sick, and maybe he only swallowed a few times because he was parched from all the fighting earlier. He sounded firm enough when he said, "That won't save you, sorcerer. I've defeated demons before. Chopsocky-hai!" Tommy flipped over the rail and arced down to slam into the demon, feet first. The bone-hued demon staggered but did not fall.

Tan watched closely as Tommy bounced down to the floor. The cult's leader clenched his fists in rage before reaching into one capacious sleeve and pulling out a square of black paper bearing characters in vivid green ink. He held it up as Tommy backflipped around the flailing, roaring demon. "By imperial order!" the Duke shouted.

At the same time, Tan concentrated and imagined a current of his divine power, his Qi, spinning down to wrap around the Duke. "For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction," he whispered. Not a traditional way to perform Yin-Yang Destruction, but it was time traditions got updated.

Tan had never pitted his power against someone as strong as the Duke, but he inhaled sharply and glared down at his opponent, imagining every great scientist of East and West at his back. Equal and opposite reaction! Sure enough, instead of bursting into flame to release the Duke's spell, the ebon paper merely smoldered. But the traitor Scion's gaze snapped up and met Tan's. Uh-oh....

No longer bothering to stay inconspicuous, Tan ran along the mezzanine to where he guessed a junction box ought to be. He also glanced up at the pipes and conduits that ran along the ceiling of the basement chamber. From below came smacks of fists and feet, growls and howls from the demon, and yelps from cultists who finally found the sense to flee.

A sound like the magnified croaking of a toad echoed through the temple. The Emerald Duke of Toads crouched down, knees and elbows splayed, and leaped up to the mezzanine in front of Tan. Backpedaling, Tan waved his gun in the Duke's direction and fired. The bullet passed yards from the Duke and struck a pipe, causing water to spray out and drench the cultists below. He hoped Tommy would remember the plan.

"How unskilled," sneered the Duke as he advanced on Tan. "Your Taiyi is strong, but I am a master of the physical as well as the spiritual!" He pounced forward. Tan prayed to his foster-mother, grabbed two power cables running along the wall and threw himself off the balcony.

Half the neon on the wall came crackling with him, raining glass and spitting sparks as tubes and cables pulled away from the wall and snapped. He didn't land as gracefully as Tommy, but at least he landed on his feet with a splash. The spray had stopped, and the ruptured pipe now poured down a steady stream of water.

Tommy launched a roundhouse kick with a loud crack that took the demon under the jaw, snapping back its head and breaking its neck. The demon fell with a splash into the spreading pool. With a second splash, the Emerald Duke jumped down to land before Tan in his toadlike fighting crouch. "I can still kill you both," he snarled.

"I don't think so," Tan replied, and jerked the cables in his hands. One end spat sparks as it landed in the pool of water. The traitor Scion spasmed as high-tension current shot through the water into his feet. The last few cultists flopped around him. Tommy stood atop the Devil-Scream Portal, balanced on one foot. He leaped down to kick the Duke in the head as he had kicked the demon, and the Duke's green glass mask shattered. The Duke fell and flopped a bit more. The last lights in the temple went out as fuses blew.

Tommy pulled a penlight from his pocket and shone it at Tan. He asked, "Are you okay? That was dangerous!"

Tan smiled wanly as shock set in. He kept his voice from shaking too badly as he said, "Well, I couldn't let you have all the fun. See why I asked you to wear rubber boots and coveralls? Insulation."

Tommy shook his head. "Engineering's too crazy for me. I'll stick to fighting demons."

THE MANDATE OF HEAVEN

The Chinese believe in thousands of Gods and spirits, whom they call shen. All these greater and lesser divinities form a civil service under the command of a divine Emperor, a Celestial Bureaucracy that resembles the mortal government of Imperial China. Or rather, the Imperial government followed the model set by the Gods – the Mandate of Heaven. The Celestial Bureaucracy has deities for every possible purpose, from great Gods who oversee wide areas of mortal society or natural phenomena, to petty spirits of individual households.

It also has Scions. Indeed, this immense and ancient pantheon includes a large proportion of Scions who achieved divinity. The current generation of Scions can do the same: They just need to perform sufficient deeds of merit. The Titans' escape should give them plenty of opportunities.

HISTORY

The Celestial Bureaucracy traces its dynasty back to the origin of the World. In the beginning, the giant Pangu emerged from the primordial chaos and chiseled it into order. Eventually, Pangu merged with his own creation to become the World. His flesh became the soil, his blood the seas and rivers, his breath the winds, his hair the trees and so on. The lice on his body became human beings.

The Gods become vague and change the subject when asked where they came from. Nevertheless, they claim Pangu as one of their number: China holds several temples to Pangu, including one on the mountain that shares his name. The shen also claim pride of place as the first pantheon to teach civilization to humanity. The boast is slightly tautologous, in that many shen deny that anyone outside China has ever been civilized.

The Celestial Bureaucracy began with a small number of primal Gods. The oldest Gods of Chinese myth were not quite human, at least in their early portrayals. The famed couple Nüwa and her brother-husband Fuxi have human heads on serpentine or dragonlike bodies, while Xiwangmu, the chatelaine of the Western Paradise, has a panther's tail and tiger's teeth. These early Gods taught mortals all the civilized arts. Three of them ruled the Middle Kingdom in remotest antiquity, and legend remembers them as the Three Sovereigns. After them came several generations of Scions who became legendary kings, heroes, nobles and sages in the ancient World. Many of them became Gods as well.

The shen continue to produce Scions who achieve divinity, and the Celestial Bureaucracy finds positions for them. The Celestial Bureaucracy has lasted millennia, with a few notable periods of reorganization; the Gods expect it to last forever.

NÜWA REPAIRS THE SKY

The greatest challenge to the Celestial Bureaucracy came long ago. The water-God Gonggong rebelled against Heaven and sought to make himself the supreme deity. Enraged by his defeat, Gonggong struck one of the mountains supporting the sky and broke it. The sky broke too, releasing dreadful chaos, and the Earth itself tilted. Floods and fires surged across the World, while terrible beasts roamed freely and devoured mortals.

The Goddess Nüwa restored order. She propped up the World using the legs of a divine tortoise, and melted stones of five colors into a paste to repair the sky. Nüwa also defeated a terrible Black Dragon and saved the World from disaster.

Yu the Great is also credited with stopping a terrible flood, perhaps the same one caused by breaking the sky. First his father Gun stole Xirang, the magical Growing Earth, from the Gods and tried using it to channel the floodwaters with dikes and levees. The Gods killed Gun for his presumption, but the infant Yu emerged from his corpse. Yu employed the Xirang as well. After many years of hard work, he built up dikes and dredged rivers (including the famous Three Gorges canyon) to channel the excess water to the sea. Yu eventually became Emperor for his great deed, and then a God in Nüwa's entourage.

THE INVESTITURE WAR

The Shang dynasty lost its virtue. After the Shang Emperor wrote a lecherous poem on the wall of Nüwa's temple, she decided the dynasty must end. Many Gods helped her in her plan to replace it with the righteous new kingdom of Zhou. Other Gods and immortals defended the Shang kingdom because they thought that rebellion could never be right. Their battles raged across the Middle Kingdom. The magical weapons and powers of the divine combatants destroyed whole armies in their battles. The supporters of Zhou won in the end, but many Gods and immortals died on both sides. The Celestial Bureaucracy never again faced such civil war, and the prospect of another such conflict is the pantheon's greatest fear. The war led to a reorganization of the Celestial Bureaucracy, and the promotion of many Scions to divinity.

CHINA'S DECLINE

The nineteenth century was a trying time for China. The empire suffered defeat after defeat in the Opium Wars. The Taiping Rebellion and Boxer Rebellion caused even worse damage. The Celestial Bureaucracy suffered a similar decline: Numerous Gods pushed their Scions to become warlords or revolutionary leaders, in hopes of founding a new

imperial dynasty, and schemed against their rivals in Heaven. Occasional incursions from adventurous Aesir and other Western deities caused further disruption — only because the shen disagreed over how to deal with the incursions in China. By the twentieth century, office politics left the Celestial Bureaucracy virtually paralyzed and functionally impotent.

Communism and Beyond

When the Communists came to power, they declared China officially atheist and closed or destroyed many temples. Many shen were outraged but Guan Yu, the new Jade Emperor, forbade any retribution. The Cultural Revolution and its aftershocks ravaged China, but the Jade Emperor declared that mortals had to work this out for themselves. Instead, Guan Yu focused the Celestial Bureaucracy's efforts on reforming itself.

Some Gods now laud the Jade Emperor's foresight. They see the People's Republic as China's third Legalist dynasty, following the Qin and Sui and, like them, bringing strength and order after a period of chaos and weakness. Ironically, some Chinese now pray to Mao Zedong as a God. (The paperwork to promote his ghost into the Celestial Bureaucracy as a minor functionary should be complete in a few decades.) Other shen, however, despise the People's Republic of China and seek ways to restore imperial rule.

The escape of the Titans inspires concern among the Celestial Bureaucracy, but no real terror. They coped with Titans before and expect to do so again.

Foreign Relations

For most of its history, the Celestial Bureaucracy didn't have foreign relations — or rather, it concentrated on the Gods of over fifty ethnic minorities within China, either destroying them or assimilating them into its own organization. All other Gods are barbarians, just like the mortals who worship them. If other pantheons try to move in on the Celestial Bureaucracy's turf, the Bureaucracy's spies stir up a third pantheon against the enemy: Use the barbarians to fight the barbarians.

The shen feel somewhat greater respect for the Amatsukami, mostly due to the mortal cultural ties fostered through Buddhism. Sun Wukong himself, for instance, helped bring Buddhist scriptures from India to China, and Guanyin is worshipped in Japan as Kwannon. The Amatsukami have the intellectual depth that the Celestial Bureaucracy finds conspicuously absent in the Aesir, the Dodekatheon and indeed most other pantheons. They even share most of the Celestial Bureaucracy's Virtues.

World War Two, however, gravely damaged relations between the Celestial Bureaucracy and the Amatsukami. When Japan invaded China, the Celestial Bureaucracy lost millions of mortal worshippers. The Jade Emperor of the time sent Amaterasu a beautifully calligraphed, elegantly phrased demand that she exercise her ancestral prerogatives over her descendant, the mortal Emperor Hirohito, and order him to withdraw his troops from the Middle Kingdom. Whatever Amaterasu thought of the mortal war, she did not like being ordered about like a misbehaving child. She sent back a beautifully calligraphed refusal, involving some elegantly phrased suggestions of what the Jade Emperor could do with the Celestial Bureaucracy. Matters went downhill from there.

For the first time in millennia, the Celestial Bureaucracy faced a major threat from a rival pantheon. After the terrible atom-fire burned in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, however, the Amatsukami had grave issues confronting them in their homeland. The Celestial Bureaucracy, meanwhile, found plenty of turmoil in the Middle Kingdom and its own ranks. The resurgence of the Titans gives both pantheons problems of greater urgency than their grievances against each other. Nevertheless, the shen refuse to treat the Amatsukami as equals until they receive a formal apology from Amaterasu herself. Gods, lesser immortals and Scions may deal with the Amatsukami on an ad-hoc basis, but relations between the two pantheons stay tense and frosty.

Most shen believe they do not need allies, anyway. They are, after all, one of the largest pantheons in the Overworld, and disruptions in the mortal World did not weaken them too badly: Hundreds of millions of Chinese still show their reverence in great and small ways, from praying at Nüwa's temples to dabbing honey on the Kitchen God's mouth to sweeten his report in Heaven. More than once since the Titans escaped, the shen have set one Titan's servants attacking the minions of another: Use the barbarians to fight the barbarians.

No longer, however, does the Celestial Bureaucracy simply ignore all the mortal World beyond the Middle Kingdom. Millions of Chinese now live in distant lands (a migration sometimes called the Chinese Diaspora) and they do very well for themselves. Most significantly, perhaps, American Chinese began shipping the coffins of their ancestors overseas for reburial. Home is where your ancestors are buried, so these emigrants make it clear they intend never to return to the Middle Kingdom. On the other hand, they show their intent to maintain the central tradition of Chinese faith. A special commission now ponders how the Celestial Bureaucracy should respond. Does the Chinese Diaspora fall under the Mandate of Heaven? Does this impose a duty on the Celestial Bureaucracy to exercise its power in distant lands?

Some shen have already made up their minds. They use Chinatowns as an excuse to meddle abroad. Other Gods call the exodus of the dead a threat to the sacred harmony between the pantheon, the people and the soil. It's a small dispute, but many Gods fear how it might grow. The Celestial Bureaucracy's greatest enemy has always been Hundun, Titan of Chaos, who sets the pantheon warring against itself.

Hundun, who gave Gonggong the power to break the sky.

Hundun, who turned Chiyou against Heaven, lured the 10 suns to sporting and set the shen warring for and against mortal dynasties.

Hundun the Unmanifest — the Titan who was never bound!

THE CELESTIAL BUREAUCRACY
THE CHINESE GODS

Virtues: Duty, Harmony, Intellect, Valor

The Chinese pantheon consists of literally hundreds of Gods, plus thousands of lesser immortals and countless minor spirits. Relatively few of the Gods possess sufficient Legend to breed potent Scions. These Gods still number in the dozens, though, so only a selection of the most notable (or notorious) can be described here.

True to its name, the Celestial Bureaucracy organizes all its Gods and spirits into departments that oversee both mortal life and universal concepts. Originally, the Bureaucracy had just eight ministries. Over the millennia, other ministries were added as they became necessary, or through the vagaries of bureaucratic infighting. The Ministry of Thunder and Storms, for instance, monitors the weather, while the Ministry of Fire governs all manifestations of that element. The Ministry of Epidemics watches the spread of diseases; the separate Ministry of Smallpox was recently abolished and its personnel reassigned. The Ministry of Exorcisms acts as the Celestial Bureaucracy's internal affairs division, policing the demons who form the pantheon's least reliable agents and chastising lesser immortals who step out of line. The large and powerful Ministry of Hell governs the Chinese Underworld and sees to the punishment and reincarnation of sinners. (Storytellers can invent other ministries as needed.)

All these ministries answer to the Yu Di or Jade Emperor (also called the Pearly Emperor). Despite his monarchic title, the Jade Emperor merely holds executive power for a sixty-year term of office. Eight senior Gods appoint the Jade Emperor; while Gods often hold the office for several terms, replacement also happens frequently enough that few Gods treat the office as a sinecure.

The eight senior Gods, in turn, divide into the three Pure Ones and the five Heavenly Emperors, or Shang Di. Two of the Pure Ones — Yuan Shi Tian Zun, or "Universal Lord of the Primordial Beginning," and Ling Bao Tian Zun, or "Universal Lord of the Numinous Treasure" — have never manifested in the World and usually remain wholly disembodied. The third, Tai Shang Lao Zun, or "Supreme Elder Lord," incarnated himself as Laozi, founder of Daoism. None of them father Scions (though Laozi occasionally acts as a Guide for promising demigods).

The five Heavenly Emperors taught civilization to humanity. Some of them ruled China in the most ancient times. Each of them is associated with a particular direction. Fuxi, Emperor of the East and Wood, taught divination, music, hunting, how to make clothing and other rudiments of civilization. As Empress of the North and Water, Fuxi's sister-wife Nüwa keeps watch over the patch of sky she mended. Shennong, the Divine Farmer and Emperor of the South and of Fire, taught agriculture and invented medicine. Xiwangmu, Queen Mother of the West, is Empress of Metal and mistress of reward and punishment. Huang Di, the Yellow Emperor of Earth and the Center, fought the World's first war against the rebel Chiyou and instituted the first mortal government. These five elders eschew day-to-day politics, but the Jade Emperor occasionally asks them for advice.

Gods tend to have multiple names or descriptive epithets, which makes it hard for mortals to tell how many there are or who's God of what. Some epithets are permanent; others change as a God moves from office to office in the Celestial Bureaucracy. Thus, Shennong has always been the Divine Farmer; but he took over the office of Yan Di, the Blazing Emperor of the South, after the previous Yan Di was executed for joining his son Chiyou's rebellion. Gods can also incarnate in the World to form new cults to themselves, under new or variant names. For instance, Huang Di recently became an immensely popular God in Hong Kong and Kowloon under a new Cantonese guise as Wong Tai Sin, "Great Immortal Wong," a.k.a. the Red Pine Immortal.

Chinese myth claims that most Gods were born of mortal parents and lived in the World before attaining divinity (sometimes after death, sometimes after becoming immortal through Daoist or Buddhist studies). In the case of the eldest Gods, these tales are allegorical. Many of the

younger Gods, however, are Scions who attained divinity. (Indeed, the current Jade Emperor is one such God.)

The huge number of Gods who have Legends ranging from 9 to 11 result in a corresponding number of Scions who lack any associated Purviews (because, as described on p. 79 of **Scion: God**, a Purview becomes associated with a God only when the God learns the Purview's avatar power). When such Scions show promise, a senior God may adopt them and provide a Visitation. The five Heavenly Emperors adopt far more Scions than they breed conventionally. Others of these low-potential Scions simply work to cultivate themselves despite their lack of associated Purviews. The Celestial Bureaucracy considers itself a meritocracy, where any Scion can advance himself through hard work and diligent study. No matter what disadvantages a Scion begins with, he can at least hope for later adoption by one of the greater Gods.

JUST FILL OUT THE PAPERWORK

At the Storyteller's option, the Celestial Bureaucracy can give a brand-new Scion any selection of associated Purviews, Epic attributes and Abilities, using a variation on the spell of adoption. Such a character — in a way, a Scion of the Bureaucracy as a whole — doesn't have a divine parent; she has a caseworker. The character can possess at most two associated Epic Attributes and two associated Purviews, plus the usual six favored Abilities.

This option gives players much greater freedom in designing the character they want. On the other hand, developing the character's power beyond the initial concept becomes more difficult.

THE MANY VIRTUES OF THE SHEN

The Virtues espoused by the Celestial Bureaucracy come from (or inspired) Daoism and Confucianism. The mystic doctrine of Daoism proclaims that all existence partakes of one indefinable essence — the Dao, or "Way," which manifests as the contrasting but interdependent principles of Yin (darkness, stillness, feminine) and Yang (light, activity, masculine), the Five Elements (Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal and Water) and the Ten Thousand Things of actual existence. Nothing has existence entirely by itself: Everything changes, fast or slow, into something else. The doctrine of Confucius lays out the rules of proper social conduct, from family relationships to affairs of state. Obedience to these rules enables people to live in harmony with each other and with the essentially benign order of the Universe. Careful thought and study help Gods and mortals to understand both Dao and duty. Passive understanding, however, is not enough: A hero must act to correct offenses to the natural and human order, whether by protesting an Emperor's unjust policies or battling a rampaging demon.

While Duty, Harmony, Intellect and Valor represent the broadest possible spread of the Celestial Bureaucracy's interests, the pantheon recognizes other Virtues as well. Obedience to authority and respect for the bureaucratic chain of command can shade into Order instead of (or as well as) Duty. The Chinese (and their Gods) formalize this Virtue as the doctrine of Legalism, which became the guiding philosophy for China's first historical emperor, Qinshihuang. On the other hand, Chinese heroes often fall deeply in love and find their passion conflicting with their responsibilities — an aspect of Loyalty. Chinese notions of Duty often fold in both of the other Virtues, but some characters might substitute Order or Loyalty for Duty, or replace another Virtue with one of these.

CHANG'E
AKA: HENG-O, MANY OTHER VARIATIONS

Description: Chang'e has been up and down the three Worlds, from deity to mortal and back again. Through a complicated series of events, she ended up living on the Moon and becoming its presiding deity. Her marriage to the solar deity Houyi is complicated, but neither God seems ready to end it. While Chang'e is one of the younger Gods, she is also immensely popular among the Chinese people, who eat round "moon cakes" during her festival and ask her to make their offspring beautiful. The People's Republic of China named its first lunar probe for her, which she found immensely flattering.

Chang'e enjoys visiting the World incognito. She has run an ice cream stand and a beauty parlor, been a fashion model and a jewel thief. While she attracts admirers and likes being around people, she always seems a little distant. Her Scions likewise tend to be attractive and socially adept, but disinclined to show their own feelings or get deeply involved in mortal lives. Deep down, they know they belong in a different World.

Associated Powers: Epic Appearance, Epic Wits, Frost, Moon, Taiyi

Abilities: Awareness, Empathy, Integrity, Investigation, Larceny, Presence

Rivals: Houyi; Artemis, Bastet, Kalfu, Susano-o, Tezcatlipoca

THE FROST PURVIEW

Chang'e is associated with the Frost Purview detailed in **Scion: Ragnarok**. Storytellers who don't have access to that book can variations of the powers in the Fire Purview as needed, or simply ignore the use of this Purview in their cycle.

FUXI

AKA: FU HSI

Description: Long, long ago, Fuxi found humanity living like animals. He taught them to clothe themselves and to cook their food, to domesticate beasts and to craft musical instruments. Fuxi invented the first calendar and laid down the first laws, including the laws of marriage. He saw the mystic trigrams of the I Ching on the back of a dragon-horse and so discovered divination. For these and many other achievements, the Chinese call him the First Sovereign, and he remains widely worshipped to this day. Ancient pictures show Fuxi holding the sun or a knotted rope and carpenter's square. He now lets the younger God Houyi act as solar deity, however.

When his duty to the Celestial Bureaucracy permits, Fuxi works to advance human welfare and culture. Fuxi no longer simply hands new arts and sciences to humanity; instead, he slips suggestions to scientists, artists, legislators and other people who can do the work themselves. China remains the focus of his attention, but he also visits arts festivals, UN conferences and other international gatherings.

While Fuxi's ancient form was that of a serpentine dragon with a human head, he now prefers the form of an elderly Chinese man of gentle and scholarly mien. In Heaven, he wears silk robes embroidered with dragons, clouds and the Sun. On Earth, he chooses contemporary garb appropriate to his surroundings.

Fuxi's Scions take after their real or adoptive father in their wide-ranging interests and intellectual prowess. They often become known among fellow experts as skilled administrators, insightful scholars and wise advisors — near the centers of power, but guiding the rulers rather than ruling themselves.

Associated Powers: Epic Intelligence, Epic Perception, Epic Stamina, Fertility, Prophecy, Sky, Sun, Taiyi

Abilities: Animal Ken, Art, Awareness, Craft, Integrity, Occult

Rivals: Huang Di; Ares, Odin, Set, Shango, Tezcatlipoca, Zeus

GUAN YU

AKA: GUAN DI (EMPEROR GUAN), MEI RÁN GONG (LORD OF THE MAGNIFICENT BEARD), MARQUIS ZHUANGMOU

Description: The Celestial Bureaucracy points to Guan Yu as its great example of a Scion who made good. Guan Yu was born in 160 CE, and history books say he died in 219. The famous *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* recounts some of his adventures. After his death, people worshipped Guan Yu as a God, according him every-higher honors until he became one of the most popular Gods in the Celestial Bureaucracy. After the debacle of World War Two, the elder Gods chose Guan Yu as the new Jade Emperor — the youngest God ever to hold that office.

Guan Yu finds ruling the Celestial Bureaucracy a constant struggle to balance competing factions. Under Emperor Guan's stewardship, the Celestial Bureaucracy has rebuilt its power to an astonishing degree, paralleling China's return to world power in the mortal World.

His imperial duties leave little time for Guan Yu to visit the World, but he still found time to become a Triad soldier in Macau, a cop in Hong Kong and in California and a businessman in Taiwan. In all his guises, he keeps his ruddy face (deep red in his divine form) and magnificently bristling beard. Though not one of the strongest Gods, Guan Yu is a great sausage of a man who looks more than ready to beat the stuffing out of any God who disobeys him. Which he has done, on occasion — not ideal Confucian rulership by virtuous example, but it gets the job done. Still, Guan Yu also has one of the keenest political minds in the pantheon, and his reputation for strict honor has few equals.

Guan Yu's Scions share their father's talent for strategic use of power. They become prosecuting attorneys or gangsters — sometimes in the same life — as well as military officers, spies, martial arts instructors, bodyguards and hard-driving business executives. They don't always follow the law, but they always follow a code that makes them highly trusted even by their enemies.

Associated Powers: Epic Charisma, Epic Manipulation, Epic Stamina, Guardian, Justice, Taiyi, War

Abilities: Command, Control, Fortitude, Integrity, Melee, Politics

Rivals: Sun Wukong; Amaterasu, Odin, Osiris, Zeus

GUANYIN

AKA: OBSERVER OF THE CRIES OF THE WORLD, BODHISATTVA OF COMPASSION

Description: Guanyin is probably the most popular Goddess in all China, and people in Japan, Korea and southeast Asia worship her as well. She is also the Celestial Bureaucracy's leading exponent of Buddhism. Guanyin was born a princess, but sought only to become a nun. Family

troubles led to adventures that form the core of her legend. Guanyin's relentless compassion eventually triumphed over her father's wrath and elevated her to full divinity. Her countless kind deeds repeatedly draw her into danger, but her penetrating insight and help from other shen always get her out again. Just about everyone in the pantheon loves Guanyin, including most of the demons. She has many admirers in other pantheons, too. Guanyin's enemies are the cruel manipulators, brutal thugs and pitiless avengers among the Gods — and these Gods *hate* her, giving her an unusually long list of rivals. (Her fellow shen Houyi and Xiwangmu merely think the Goddess of Mercy is annoyingly naïve.)

Guanyin frequently visits the World to help suffering mortals. Recent guises include a hospital nurse, the director of an orphanage, a UNICEF assistant director and a Red Cross volunteer. Indeed, every major charity or humanitarian aid group in the World knows her under one alias or another. Guanyin prefers to use her divine powers sparingly, allowing mortals help themselves, but the death tolls from many natural disasters, famines and brush wars would be much higher without the Goddess of Mercy subtly facilitating international aid.

Scions of Guanyin tend to follow their mother's interests and methods. They are not great warriors, but are often superb persuaders. Whether as the relief worker facing down a warlord, a diplomat demanding to see political prisoners or the doctor who runs a clinic in a brutal slum, Scions of Guanyin show quiet courage in facing humanity at its worst. They bring the same quiet courage to the Overworld War. While other Scions have slain titanspawn without number, a few Scions of Guanyin have convinced servants of the Titans to switch sides.

Associated Powers: Epic Appearance, Epic Charisma, Epic Perception, Health, Mystery, Taiyi

Abilities: Academics, Awareness, Empathy, Investigation, Medicine, Presence

Rivals: Houyi, Xiwangmu; Aphrodite, Ares, Hel, Isis, Kalfu, Set, Tezcatlipoca, Tlaloc, Vidar

HOUYI
AKA: ARCHER YI

Description: Yi the Archer saved the World, and he expects to get a little respect for it. Like his wife Chang'e, he's both been exiled to the World and allowed back in Heaven, but not allowed into the pantheon's centers of power. While Houyi does possess some talent for leadership, he became a tyrant when for a time he ruled part of ancient China. Houyi does not apologize for this and remains the pantheon's leading advocate for Legalism. The pantheon values Houyi for his ability to take swift, direct action — but Houyi needs cajoling. He insists on having things done his way and he no longer agrees to help others until he has a solid contract for repayment.

This last attitude serves Houyi well in the modern World. While he sometimes exercises his hunting prowess as a safari leader, Houyi has also been a high-priced

archery instructor, a mercenary, an assassin for hire, a millionaire architect (one of his less well known talents), a bounty hunter and a venture capitalist in solar energy. Various spy movies in the 60s entranced Houyi with laser weaponry's potential, so he backs this technology as well. In every identity, Houyi looks like a hard-bitten Asian man with the unnerving, thousand-yard stare of an experienced sniper. His Scions likewise tend to be hardcases who do the dirty work for other people — but expect their due reward.

Associated Powers: Epic Dexterity, Epic Stamina, Epic Strength, Sun, Taiyi

Abilities: Athletics, Command, Craft, Marksmanship, Stealth, Survival

Rivals: Chang'e, Guanyin, Yanluo; Apollo, Baldur, Huitzilopochtli, Set.

HUANG DI
AKA: YELLOW EMPEROR, WONG TAI SIN

Description: The Yellow Emperor still involves himself in war and politics, in both Heaven and the mortal world. Although Huang Di no longer rules the shen, he cannot resist advising the Jade Emperor (whether that office-holder wants it or not) as Heaven's most visible policy fanatic. Currently, Huang Di debates strategies for fighting the Titans. The Jade Emperor also sends him on regular diplomatic missions to other pantheons. The Yellow Emperor believes that China has the right and duty to dominate the world — all three Worlds — but he knows better than to express such sentiments around barbarians.

Huang Di is too busy and restless to keep mortal identities for long. Instead, he uses his Epic Manipulation to mingle with mortal movers and shakers without anyone realizing that they don't actually know him. He regularly visits the Chinese Congress of People's Deputies as a nameless (but highly respected) Party official or retired general, though he also visits and advises the government of Taiwan. Huang Di takes guises ranging from an international security consultant to the great-uncle you never heard of before.

Scions of the Yellow Emperor show the same restless intellectual energy. Like their father, they tend to take over by sheer force of personality, and by presenting coherent plans while everyone else wonders what they should do. Huang Di actively steers his Scions toward positions where they can shape world events and public opinions, in occupations ranging from the military to the media.

Associated Powers: Epic Intelligence, Epic Manipulation, Epic Stamina, Earth, Guardian, Mystery, Taiyi, War

Abilities: Academics, Awareness, Command, Integrity, Melee, Politics

Rivals: Fuxi, Sun Wukong; Athena, Huitzilopochtli, Ogoun, Questalcoátl, Tyr

NEZHA
AKA: NO CHA, ZHONGTAN YUANSHUAI

Description: As a rising demigod, the Scion Nezha became so arrogant and troublesome that the Jade Emperor commanded his suicide. Nezha had a Fated role to play in the Investiture War, though, and so his teacher resurrected him. While Nezha became one of the great heroes of that war and one of the great adventurers of the Celestial Bureaucracy, the rest of the pantheon neither forgot nor forgave his past misdeeds until the Handsome Monkey King gave them a new standard of comparison.

Whether as a God or in mortal guise, Nezha looks and acts like a teenager around 16 or 17 – frequently, a smartass teenager. He's the young soldier whose CO swears he will never become an officer, the brash kung fu student, the fresh-faced collegian, the novice firefighter or the obsessive hang-glider. Flight, fire and combat attract him.

Nezha's Scions are usually accidental, but he tries to do right by them when he finds out about them. He tends to Visit them in their teens, though, which ensures that they experience youthful adventures just as he did. While Nezha's Scions tend to be quick studies, they also tend to overestimate their capacities and become impatient with anyone who says they're too young. Like their true father, they also tend to have issues with their mortal stepfathers and other aged authority figures.

Associated Powers: Epic Dexterity, Epic Strength, Epic Wits, Fire, Sky, Taiyi, War

Abilities: Athletics, Brawl, Control, Larceny, Melee, Thrown

Rivals: Sun Wukong; Athena, Damballah, Horus, Izanagi, Odin

NÜWA
AKA: NU KUA

Description: One Chinese legend credits Nüwa with creating humanity from yellow clay, but her most famous deed was to repair the broken sky and restore order to the World. She shares her role as lunar deity with the newcomer Chang'e.

Nüwa still takes great interest in boundaries, travel and management of land and water. Like her husband Fuxi, she once took the form of a human-headed dragon. Nowadays, though, she visits the World as an elderly but vigorous woman, in guises such as a village farm-wife, a tour guide, a civil engineer specializing in flood control or an old lady selling fish from a sampan. Nüwa prefers to take socially invisible roles as she watches for the Titans' influence in the World. When she finds it, she appoints lesser immortals or Scions to deal with the problem.

The lesser immortals of the Three Gorges region hold Nüwa responsible for the great dam that is drowning their homes and will change the balance of natural forces throughout China. Nüwa did not devise the Three Gorges Dam, but she blocks every petition for the Celestial Bureaucracy to act against it. Nüwa takes a great interest in all flood control projects; she wants the Celestial Bureaucracy to take covert control of New Orleans dike repairs and similar projects around the world, to make sure they're done right.

Scions of Nüwa often become builders, nurturers or (all too often now) cleaners of other people's messes. They tend to be good at finding things out and designing innovative solutions to problems, whether as sewage-treatment engineers, psychiatrists, computer hackers or high-tech assassins.

Associated Powers: Epic Intelligence, Epic Stamina, Epic Wits, Fertility, Magic, Moon, Psychopomp, Taiyi, Water

Abilities: Academics, Awareness, Craft, Integrity, Investigation, Science

Rivals: Xiwangmu; Isis, Kalfu, Poseidon, Tlaloc, Tsuki-Yomi

SHENNONG
AKA: DIVINE FARMER, YAN DI

Description: As the second of China's three mythic sovereigns, Shennong invented medicine by finding every plant in the world, eating it and identifying what it did to his body. He also invented agriculture. His favored mortal identities include ethnopharmacologist and agronomist, though Shennong has also appeared as a medical researcher, an agribusiness tycoon, a fertilizer dealer and a hermit in the mountains.

Some Gods don't like the amount of time Shennong spends on projects to improve mortal agriculture and health care, especially outside China. They believe he should confine his efforts to the Middle Kingdom. The Divine Farmer brushes aside such criticism by saying that what's good for the wider World is good for China, too.

Like their divine father, Shennong's Scions tend to speak bluntly and do things themselves. They also naturally gravitate to the same occupations that interest the Divine Farmer himself. While Shennong does not order his Scions about, he encourages them to help the World through direct action, particularly in the Third World: Shennong has Scions in a variety of non-governmental organizations devoted to improving agriculture, public health and education. Operating on the ground, close to the people, they sometimes spot malign forces that escape the notice of other Gods. Then, Shennong expects his Scions to deal with the problem on the spot. This does not endear them, or their father, to shen who insist on acting through proper channels — and Shennong doesn't care if he or his Scions trespass on the turf of other pantheons.

Associated Powers: Epic Intelligence, Epic Perception, Epic Stamina, Fertility, Fire, Health, Prophecy, Taiyi

Abilities: Awareness, Command, Fortitude, Integrity, Medicine, Survival

Rivals: Guan Yu; Amaterasu, Atum-Re, Geb, Huitzilopochtli, Shango, Xipe Totec

SUN WUKONG

AKA: HANDSOME MONKEY KING, GREAT SAGE EQUAL TO HEAVEN

Description: The Handsome Monkey King hatched from a stone egg, and his adventures became the subject of the famous *Journey to the West*. Sun Wukong is trouble, especially because the shen believe Hundun created him. His passage from titanspawn to God was turbulent, to say the least, but the shen learned to accept him. Usually. On good days. Indeed, more shen enjoy seeing the Great Sage Equal to Heaven flout the pantheon's famous decorum than would care to admit it. An equal number of Gods want to strangle him, but Monkey is one of the most unkillable entities in Heaven – the Celestial Bureaucracy has tried. Now they're just glad he's on their side.

Monkey is vain and impulsive. Though clever, he is not half as clever as he thinks. Hard lessons somewhat reduced his kleptomania and gluttony. He learned manners, though he sometimes forgets them. He's also one of the pantheon's greatest fighters, with an awesome talent for driving his enemies mad with sheer irritation.

The Handsome Monkey King often visits his simian subjects in the World. Now and then he takes human form, usually to go to a party. He never maintains a mortal entity for long (usually just for one day or night). He is the boisterous guy, immune to put-downs and rejections, who seems incredibly funny and charming if you've had enough to drink. Sun Wukong never checks to see if a dalliance results in a Scion, but he always Visits his Scions if another God discovers them and calls them to his attention — and then he says he planned it all along.

Sun Wukong's Scions can be born into any social stratum. They take after their father in their combat prowess and their ability to get in trouble. Whether pickpockets or playboys, they collect arrests and slapped faces, but laugh it off and dive into the next adventure. They show great loyalty to their friends, though, especially when standing up for a friend means a good scrap.

Associated Powers: Epic Dexterity, Epic Stamina, Epic Strength, Animal (monkeys), Chaos, Taiyi, War

Abilities: Athletics, Brawl, Fortitude, Larceny, Melee, Survival

Rivals: Guan Yu, Huang Di, Nezha; Hermes, Kalfu, Loki, and all other tricksters. Plus, all the more humorless Gods loathe him.

XIWANGMU

AKA: HSI WANG MU, QUEEN MOTHER OF THE WEST, WANGMU NIANGNIANG

Description: Few Gods in the Celestial Bureaucracy changed so much over the millennia as the Queen Mother of the West. Long ago, Xiwangmu was a deity of cataclysm and divine vengeance, a woman with tiger's teeth and panther's tail. At the same time, she grew the peaches of immortality. Later, she adopted gracious manners, elegant gowns and a gift for extemporized poetry. Xiwangmu became the chatelaine of Mount Kunlun and queen of the Daoist sages who achieved immortality. As such, she remains one of the most important members of the Celestial Bureaucracy, whose authority extends as far as she wishes it to go. When the Gods desire a subtle yet savage Fate for an enemy, they hand the job to Xiwangmu, and bid her show her teeth.

Acting in the mortal World, Xiwangmu has been a secret agent, a lion tamer in a circus, a fortune-teller and the mistress of a Triad leader. Wherever she goes, people tend to receive amazing good fortune or horrible deaths, depending on how the Queen Mother judges their merits. Her Scions tend to be similarly subtle and ruthless, particularly in their benevolence. Whether the World knows them as a secretary in Shanghai, a martial arts sifu in Hong Kong or an exorcist in Taiwan, Xiwangmu bids her Scions to see that mortals receive the consequences of their actions. Thus does the Queen Mother uphold the harmony of the World.

Associated Powers: Epic Dexterity, Epic Stamina, Epic Wits, Animal (panther, tiger), Health, Justice, Magic, Taiyi

Abilities: Animal Ken, Awareness, Brawl, Integrity, Occult, Presence

Rivals: Guanyin, Nüwa; Athena, Frigg, Quetzalcoátl, Susano-o, Shango

YANLUO

AKA: YEN-LO-WANG, KING YAMA RAJA

Description: The Celestial Bureaucracy's second great exponent of Buddhist compassion became overseer of Di Yu — the Chinese Hell (pp. 112-115) — so that he might help the dead to expiate their sins instead of being weighed down by them for lifetime after lifetime. Every few centuries, the Celestial Bureaucracy demotes Yanluo for excessive kindness to his charges and letting them reincarnate too soon. However, no other God of Yanluo's Legend wants the job, and the other nine Yama Kings of Di Yu lack Yanluo's power. Eventually, the Bureaucracy gives Yanluo his old job back.

The Chinese Diaspora extends Yanluo's interests beyond traditional Chinese territory. He advocates increased involvement of the shen in world politics (all three Worlds). He treats with other death-Gods and meddles in mortal affairs far more than the Jade Emperor authorizes.

In mortal guise, Yanluo has been an undertaker, a Buddhist monk, a grief counselor, a homicide detective and a prison psychologist. His Scions likewise feel attracted to occupations that deal with death, spirituality, captivity or reform, from priest to forensic pathologist. Spiritual pride is a frequent character flaw: Convinced that they act for the best, they neglect to ask mere mortals if they *want* to be enlightened or improved.

Associated Powers: Epic Manipulation, Epic Perception, Darkness, Death, Justice, Taiyi

Abilities: Empathy, Integrity, Investigation, Occult, Politics, Presence

Rivals: Houyi; Ares, Hades, Hel, Mictlántecutli, Osiris

Pantheon Purview: Taiyi

This Purview's name means "Great Principle." It refers to the universal law of transformation: Nothing stays the same forever, and everything eventually changes into something else. The universal force called Qi flows and changes according to the principles of Yang and Yin – the active and passive, archetype of all polarities and oppositions – as well as the Five Elements of Fire, Earth, Metal, Water and Wood, and the trigrams and hexagrams of the I Ching. One who masters these principles of change can transform anything into anything. The shen regard all their powers as exercises of Qi. Their study of the Great Principle, however, leads to a unique set of Boons dedicated to transformation.

A Scion who wants to learn Taiyi must engage in mystic exercises to develop her sense of how supernatural power flows and changes form. The martial arts are one way to learn Taiyi: Many shen perform special taolu (similar to Japanese katas) when they wield the Purview's Boons. Scions can also meditate and imagine their Qi flowing between different parts of their bodies. Special diet, herbal medicines and many other disciplines can also enable a Scion to learn Taiyi.

Five-Cycle Augmentation (Taiyi •)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 Legend

The first art of Taiyi is learning to pass Qi to another being to augment his own supernatural force. The Scion concentrates, touches another character who is using a Boon or spell, and spends a point of Legend. This enhances the target character's use of the Boon or spell as if his Legend were one higher than its actual value. For instance, a dice pool that included the character's Legend would gain one die, or the recipient's Legend would be treated as one higher than its real value (for purposes of Boons whose effectiveness depends on the attacker's Legend being equal or higher than his target's).

Shen can perform Five-Cycle Augmentation in a series, each character passing her point of Legend to the next in line until the final character receives the boost in effective Legend from all of them. This boost cannot exceed the highest Legend value of any of the participants, though, and it cannot raise anyone's effective Legend above 12. Thus, if four Scions used Five-Cycle Augmentation in series on a fifth, and they all had Legend 2, the final recipient's effective Legend could not rise above 4.

Yin-Yang Destruction (Taiyi ••)

Dice Pool: Legend + Occult or Science

Cost: 1 Legend (+ 1 Willpower)

After learning how to enhance the Qi of another legendary being, a Scion learns how to counter the supernatural force in powers directed against him. He shapes his own Qi into the perfect negation of the power used against him, the Yin to its Yang. This is much easier, however, against powers the Scion has experience at using himself.

When someone uses an All-Purpose Purview Boon or spell against the Scion, and he has a tick free to engage in a Guard action, he may spend a point of Legend while his player rolls (Legend + the highest of the character's Occult or Science). Sufficient successes mean that the Boon or spell does not affect the Scion. If the Scion knows any Boon from the Purview that was used against him (or a spell, in the case of the Magic Purview), the roll's difficulty equals the attacker's Legend. Otherwise, the difficulty becomes twice the attacker's Legend.

Yin-Yang Destruction can be used at range to counter a Boon or spell that isn't specifically directed at the Scion, but this requires the character to spend a Willpower point and take a Miscellaneous Action (Speed 5, -1 DV) instead of a Guard Action. If you can perceive the character's use of the spell or Boon, you can negate it. Of course, nothing keeps your enemy from re-using the Boon or spell on her next action.

Five-Cycle Conjunction (Taiyi •••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: None

Increasing mastery of Yin, Yang and the Five Elements enables a student of Taiyi to protect his own All-Purpose Purview Boons from Yin-Yang Destruction. She does this by altering the effect of a Boon so that it falls within two Purviews at once. She must know at least one Boon from each Purview, and still needs to carry a Birthright for at least one of the two Purviews.

The altered Boon still has the game effect of its original Purview, but a visual effect based on the other Purview. For instance, a Scion who knew Unseen Shield (Guardian • • • •) and at least one Fertility Boon could manifest her Unseen Shield as a celestial lotus that grows from her mouth to block incoming attacks. Or, a Scion with Heavenly Flare (Sun • • •) and Animal Communication with snakes (Animal •) could conjure a host of glowing spiritual snakes that bite the eyes of nearby people, dazzling them for a time. A Scion with Wind's Freedom (Sky • •) and a Fire Boon could define his flight as riding on a wheel of fire, like Nezha. Some combinations of Purviews may seem quite peculiar, but if the player can come up with some flamboyant effect to justify the linkage of the two Purviews, the Storyteller should allow it.

On buying this Boon, the Scion defines one of her All-Purpose Purview Boons as conjoined to another All-Purpose Purview she knows. Each time she gains another dot of Taiyi, she can define another one of the Boons she already knows as conjoined to another Purview. A Boon cannot be part of more than two Purviews.

Aside from looking cool, Five-Cycle Conjunction protects a Boon from Yin-Yang Destruction: Since the Boon has two Purviews, a defender's player must roll twice the character's Legend to negate the Boon, unless the defender knows Boons from *both* Purviews. Magic, unfortunately, cannot be conjoined with another Purview.

Eight Trigram Transformation (Taiyi ••••)

Dice Pool: Wits + Craft

Cost: 3 Legend

Matter constantly takes new forms, from water vapor condensing into rain to rock's slow decomposition into soil. All matter is just a particularly dense form of Qi, and the Five Elements and Eight Trigrams govern all their transformations. A scholar of the Great Principle of Change can nudge this potential for change into new paths, and so transform matter into new forms and substances. To do this, she need merely touch the object and trace out the trigrams that represent the sort of change she desires. For a small change, she can trace the trigrams with her finger. Large objects (anything larger than person-sized) requires drawing trigrams on the object using ink, chalk or some other means. Transforming an object takes as many miscellaneous actions as the difficulty set by the object's size.

With this Boon, a Scion can transform inanimate objects. The size of the object sets the difficulty of the player's roll.

Difficulty	Size
1	Hand-sized (pistol, book, bowling ball, briefcase)
2	Person-sized (bicycle, store mannequin, chair)
3	Horse-sized (horse, big motorcycle, sofa)
4	Car-sized (auto, bank vault door)
5	House-sized (small house, panel truck; maximum for this Boon)
+1	Create object with moving parts (pistol, bicycle, car)
+2	Create complicated object (calculator)
+3	Create substances with exotic properties (nuclear fuel rod)

The character can only transform discrete objects into other discrete objects of the same size class, such as turning a rock into a flashlight, or turning a bank vault door into a very large block of cheese. A Scion cannot simply disintegrate an object, or create something from air or water.

The change is permanent, unless the Scion decides to reverse it. To do this, she need merely touch the object and will it to revert; this does not cost Legend. Magical objects are immune to Eight Trigram Transformation unless they are the character's own Relics.

Qi Hand (Taiyi •••••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 2 Legend per item per action

As demigods master the Great Principle, they can manipulate objects using currents of Qi in a form of telekinesis. A Scion could wrestle someone without touching him, wield one weapon while another dances in the air beside her, or type at a computer keyboard while peeking in through a window. Anything a person can do by hand, the Qi Hand can do as well. Actions involving the Qi Hand use the same dice pools as they would if the character performed the action himself. For instance, wielding a sword using the Qi Hand would call for a (Dexterity + Melee) roll. The Strength of the Qi Hand equals the character's Legend, so a physically frail Scion could use her Qi Hand to send burly bikers flying.

A character can manipulate one or several objects using the Qi Hand. If the character uses the Qi Hand on just one object, she can also perform other actions at the same time. However, these do count as multiple actions and take the appropriate penalties (**Scion: Hero**, pp. 179-180). For example, a character could hold one shotgun in her hands and wield another in her Qi Hand, but would roll the (Dexterity + Marksmanship) attack for both guns at a –4 dice penalty. Any Knacks that permit multiple actions without penalty apply as much to actions done using Qi Hand as they would to actions the character performs herself.

Alternatively, a character can simultaneously manipulate as many objects as the sum of her Wits and Epic Wits (though the cost in Legend points can mount up quickly). For instance, a Scion with Wits 4 and Epic Wits 3 could telekinetically pick up and hurl seven spears at once. All the telekinetically-controlled objects must perform the same basic task, though, so while the Scion could use Qi Hand to hurl seven spears (using Thrown) or stab with them (using Melee), she could not hurl three and stab with four. The player's dice roll also takes a single multiple action penalty, and the character cannot take any other actions while directing all these objects — the Qi Hand takes her full attention.

The multiple action penalty that results from using Qi Hand to attack can render this a dubious tactic. On the other hand, a character can take a Coordinate Assault action (**Scion: Hero**, p. 190) to reduce her target's DV against her multiple attacks. Since she coordinates with herself, however, this requires no dice roll: The target's DV penalty equals the number of simultaneous attacks.

Living Hexagram Metamorphosis (Taiyi) ••••• •)

Dice Pool: Wits + Medicine

Cost: 5 Legend

Tales of Gods and sages often describe them transforming people and animals as well as inanimate objects. For instance, Wong Tai Sin turned the sheep he was supposed to tend into white boulders, and back again. This Boon functions like Eight Trigram Transformation, but can affect living targets. This includes creating life from the inanimate. However, the Scion cannot create intelligence or a soul where none existed before.

Shen can use this Boon to transform themselves into a demonic creature, an application called the Devil-Sage Body. The demonic form has skin colored some vivid hue such as scarlet, green or indigo, claws, jutting fangs and, very often, up to three heads and six arms. The chief practical effect is to enable the character to inflict lethal damage with unarmed attacks. The character also gains one dot of negative Epic Appearance and the Dreadful Mien Knack (if she did not have these already). Positive Epic Appearance and associated Knacks are unusable while the character is in Devil-Sage form. Characters cannot use Living Trigram Metamorphosis to assume other forms. Shen often assume the Devil-Sage Body for battle, as a way to scare off weaker foes or innocent bystanders.

Resurrection Anchor (Taiyi) ••••• ••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 10 Legend

Most creatures of Legend return from death only if they possess Ultimate Stamina. The shen, however, regard death itself as just another change of form and state. Even a demigod can return from death... with help, and at cost.

To use this Boon, a Scion must form a permanent Fatebinding with another Scion, God or creature with a minimum Legend of 5. Establishing this connection costs 10 Legend points, which the character cannot regain unless he renounces the Fateful link (and with it, his chance for resurrection). If he dies, this other character can bring him back. This requires persuading at least 50 people to worship at a shrine to the deceased character, within a year from the character's death. The massed worship recalls the character and re-creates his body. However, his Legend score drops by 1. Any Boons or Epic Attribute ratings that exceed the new (Legend - 1) limit are lost — the character must buy them all over again (if he chooses) once he regains his former Legend.

A Scion with this Boon can also serve as an anchor to resurrect another character, who need not possess this Boon but must have a minimum Legend of 5. This too costs 10 legend points to forge the Fatebinding between them, constructing a shrine and persuading people to worship the slain character. However, the resurrected character loses the dot of Legend, not the Scion who performed the resurrection.

Divinize Kuei (Taiyi) ••••• •••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 10 Legend

To a great sage of Taiyi, the difference between ghosts and Gods is more one of degree than of kind. At will, the character can transform a ghost into a lesser immortal with a maximum Legend of 4. This can be a demon, an Earth God (see p. 101), the Chinese analogues to nymphs or alfar — whatever the Scion wants. To perform this feat, the Scion walks in a circle around the ghost she intends to transform, placing her feet so her steps form stylized images of various groups of stars, a practice called "pacing the constellations." The transformed ghost may feel some gratitude for his promotion to lesser immortal, and the exercise of Legend has the normal chance of Fatebinding, but the Boon does not intrinsically grant the Scion any control over the lesser immortal he just made.

Grand Unity Transformation (Taiyi) ••••• ••••)

Dice Pool: Willpower + Legend + Craft, Occult or Science

Cost: 15 Legend

A divine master of the Great Principle can create whatever surroundings she wants, in a wide area centered on herself. As a dramatic action taking five minutes to complete, the character can create whatever simple, inanimate objects she wants. She can also create living creatures, natural forces such as flames and storm-winds, or virtually anything else she can imagine, depending on what other Boons she knows. The Scion's player rolls the dice pool and allocates the successes to various transformations:

- **Area:** Each success gives 5 yards of radius if the Scion uses this Boon in the World, or 50 yards' radius in the Overworld or Underworld. At least one success must go to area.
- **Followers:** The Scion can create people (or person-like creatures) by allocating successes to dots of Followers. For instance, the Scion could allocate four successes to create a demon, five successes to create a squad of five demons, or 10 successes to create two squads of five. The character needs at least five dots in Fertility or Health Boons to create living Followers or in Death Boons to create ghosts, but no specific Boon in any of those three Purviews is needed.
- **Creatures:** Successes can also be allocated to dots of Creatures. Every Creature must be bought separately. Again, the character needs Fertility or Health Boons to create living Creatures.
- **Powers and Environmental Effects:** This requires spending successes on a Boon with some connection to the desired effect. For instance, spending two successes on Wind's Freedom (Sky ••) would create an area in which everyone could fly, while six successes for Inferno (Fire ••••• •) could fill the area with that effect — but another success, allocated to Fire Immunity (Fire •) would

make everyone in the area immune! The Scion can only allocate successes based on the Boons she herself knows. Use of Mystery can even imbue the transformed area with information the Scion herself does not know equivalent to one use of the Mystery Purview (so this offers no advantage compared to using the Mystery Purview by itself).

• **Complexity:** The Scion must allocate one success to create objects with moving parts, or two successes for notably intricate shapings, such as giving everyone in the area a notebook computer or covering every surface with immaculate calligraphy of the poems of Li Po.

Storytellers can come up with additional ways the character can spend successes to customize a zone of Grand Unity Transformation. The wondrously shaped reality of the zone lasts for one scene. Then everything the Scion transformed reverts to its former state and any animals, people, spirits or the like disappear. A Scion can make the change permanent, but this costs the character a dot of permanent Willpower. If the Scion permanently transforms part of the World into someplace visibly magical, the transformed zone becomes a small terra incognita.

Reshape Shen (Tai) ••••• •••••

Dice Pool: Willpower + Legend + Command

Cost: 20 Legend

Ultimate mastery of the Dao enables a God to transform other Gods, spirits or lesser immortals. The other God must be willing or somehow compelled not to resist. The greatest Gods in the Celestial Bureaucracy use this Boon to reshape lesser Gods so they can better fulfill the duties of a new office, or as the ultimate threat of punishment by taking away a God's former identity. The Celestial Bureaucracy also used this Boon to assimilate the Gods of China's conquered ethnic minorities: It forms the pantheon's ultimate threat against foreign deities.

To use this Boon, the character's player must win a contested roll of the Scion's (Willpower + Legend + Command) versus the target's (Willpower + Legend + Integrity), even if the subject is willing. The process is a one minute, -2 DV dramatic action. If the roll succeeds, the Scion can turn his subject into a different character. The Scion's player defines the transformed entity's Legend, Attributes, Abilities, Epic Attributes, Boons, Virtues — everything.

The chief limitation is that the Scion cannot create a character of greater power than the subject was before. This is defined as possessing more dots in a class of trait than the character had before. Thus, the subject cannot gain a greater Legend, more total dots of Attributes, more total dots of Abilities, more total dots of Virtues, more total dots of Boons or more total dots of Epic Attributes. (Birthrights are largely malleable, since characters may gain and lose them in the course of play, without any use of experience points.) Also, the subject cannot be made mortal: she must remain a creature of Legend (though a God could be turned back into a hero).

The God who uses this awful power can alter his subject's memories along with everything else. While the physical and supernatural change is permanent and irreversible by anything less than The Wyrd (**Scion: God**, p. 111), however, erased memories may return. This may happen when the transformed character channels Willpower through a Virtue, faces a situation that calls for a Virtue roll or any other stressful situation that the Storyteller considers appropriate. Under these circumstances, the transformed character's player rolls (Charisma + Integrity) as a reflexive action for the character; the player cannot apply bonus successes for Epic Charisma, spend Willpower for a bonus success or apply Legend. With five successes, a memory from the subject's former existence returns.

Birthrights

Over the millennia, the shen have granted a prodigious variety of mythic beasts, demons, spirits and magical items to their Scions. These are only a few examples.

Creatures

Zouwu (Creature •••, Optional Relic •)

Chinese legend includes many different creatures that could be described as "unicorns." The qilin (or Japanese Kirin; see **Scion: Hero**, p. 326) is only one of them. The zouwu is another. This beast resembles a deer or horse with one short horn on its head — too short for any possible use as a weapon. Its coat is dappled red, black, blue, white and yellow; the beast's mane, fetlocks and tail can be any one of those colors. A zouwu's tail extends longer than its body, with a tuft of long hair at the end. The beast is most notable, however, for its extraordinary running speed.

A zouwu has the same traits as a horse (**Scion: Hero**, p. 331) but has a Legend of 3, Epic Attributes and Knacks: Epic Strength 1 (Holy Bound) and Epic Dexterity 2 (Lightning Sprinter, doubled). By spending a point of Legend, the beast's running speed quadruples (instead of the normal doubling from Lightning Sprinter) to about 100 miles per hour. A zouwu can keep this up as long as a horse can gallop. Temperamentally, the zouwu is about equal to a horse as well. Mere mortals perceive the zouwu as a smallish horse, until it spends Legend to reach its full running speed.

Paper Horse: A Scion can simply keep a zouwu as she would a horse. Shen, however, often keep their zouwu in the form of a scroll of a painted horse. Spending a point of Legend turns the paper figure into the zouwu; another Legend point returns it to paper form. The scroll is a one-dot Relic.

Followers

Horseface and Oxhead (Followers •••• to •••••, Optional Relic •)

The Chinese Hells are staffed by demons who resemble brawny men with the heads of horses or oxen. Some accounts say there are only two such demons, named Ma Mien (Horse Face) and Niu T'ou (Ox Head), but that's ridiculous — two demons couldn't do all the work for dozens of hells! All the demons answer to the names of Oxhead and Horseface, though. They used to wear tiger-skin loincloths. Nowadays, Yanluo dresses them in spiffy military uniforms. The demons wield large clubs (equal to a Quauhololli) or various Chinese polearms (equal to a trident or naginata, depending on the form – see **Scion: Hero**, p. 202 for mechanics on all of these). Only a few elite squads train with machine guns and other modern military hardware.

Now and then, Scions receive a squad of Oxheads and Horsefaces as Followers, but they must file reports on any mission they assign to these demons. The demons' first loyalty is to Yanluo and the Jade Emperor, however, so they may desert or turn on a master who uses them against the interests of the Celestial Bureaucracy. A Scion typically needs some sort of Relic in order to call the demons, such as properly signed and stamped authorization papers for their use.

Oxheads and Horsefaces have the traits of an experienced soldier or mercenary (**Scion: Hero**, p. 283) but have Duty 4, Harmony 1, Intellect 1 and Valor 4, making them tremendously brave and dedicated to their jobs and to anyone they are assigned to obey. They are also immortal and can perceive immaterial ghosts (as the Death Senses Boon). These supernatural benefits raise their value as Followers by one dot.

Terracotta Warrior (Followers •••• to •••••, Optional Guide ••)

The tomb complex of Qinshihuang yielded some seven thousand terracotta figures of men and horses. Each figure of a soldier has an individualized face, suggesting they are genuine portraits of actual soldiers and officers in the First Emperor's army. The statues have suffered damage over the millennia, but for effigies buried more than 2,000 years, the preservation is amazing.

The Celestial Bureaucracy managed to steal an additional three thousand figures without the archeologists ever knowing they were there. Each statue imprisons the actual soul of a long-dead soldier. The shen now have a small army of colossi animated by battle-tested ghosts. Gods may grant these warriors to their Scions. A single soldier is a four-dot Follower.

Terracotta warriors are immensely strong and quite difficult to damage, though they move stiffly. These soldiers can also function as Guides, in that some of them can train Scions in swordsmanship, crossbow archery and other archaic military skills. Terracotta warriors are highly loyal to their assigned superiors, but also can think for themselves.

As long as a terracotta warrior doesn't move, only supernatural senses (such as Death Sight or The Unlidded Eye) reveal it as a colossus. A Scion can easily pass off the statue as a reproduction.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 2, Stamina 5; Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 1; Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Virtues: Duty 4, Harmony 1, Intellect 1, Valor 3

Abilities: Academics 1, Animal Ken 2, Athletics 1, Awareness 3, Brawl 3, Command 1, Empathy 1, Integrity 3, Marksmanship 3, Medicine 1, Melee 3, Survival 1, Thrown 1

Supernatural Powers:

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 1 (Crushing Grip), Epic Stamina 1 (Self-Healing)

Made of Brick: Terracotta warriors do not need to eat, drink or breathe. They ignore the harshest winter chill or the heat of a furnace. Poisoning them works about as well as poisoning a brick. They do chip, but can hold broken-off pieces in place and use their Self-Healing to counter Crippling effects. As long as a Scion can recover most of the pieces, a "destroyed" terracotta warrior can be repaired with clay and a kiln to make it good as new; this requires an (Intelligence + Craft) roll at difficulty 3.

Join Battle: 6

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 5, Damage 4B, Parry DV -, Speed 6

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 4, Damage 7B, Parry DV 2, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 6, Damage 4B, Parry DV 3, Speed 4

Xiphos: Accuracy 6, Damage 7L, Parry DV 3, Speed 4

Hankyu: Accuracy 6, Damage 6L, Range 30, Speed 5

Soak: 1A/4L/6B

Health Levels: -0/-0/-0/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 3 **Willpower:** 7

Legend: 2 **Legend Points:** 4

Other Notes: These mechanics represents a basic infantryman trained at both archery and

melee combat. Instead of a shortsword and bow, it could carry a spear, a crossbow or other weapons. You can also customize the terracotta warrior by adding up to two dots of additional skills: Control (Horse) for a cavalry soldier (not useful unless a divine parent also supplied one of the terracotta horses, but the soldier could train Scions); Command for an officer; Thrown for a slinger or javelineer; and so on.

Guides

Ancestral Ghosts (Guide •••, Relic •)

The Chinese worship their Gods, but they revere their ancestors. Duty to one's parents does not end upon death; parents, grandparents and remoter ancestors can wield powerful influence from beyond the grave. Ancestors who receive proper reverence and offerings can bless their descendants, while neglected ancestors can curse them with all manner of bad luck.

As children of the Gods, Scions *potentially* outrank the ghosts of their ancestors. That does not excuse them from filial duty. Indeed, a Scion who continues to show due respect to her ancestors after becoming a God sets an example of propriety that other Gods can envy and admire.

The ghost of an ancestor therefore makes an excellent Guide, as advising (and if necessary, correcting) descendants is proper conduct for a ghost. Naturally, the Gods try to select dead relatives of great virtue and sagacity; failing that, they select ancestors of great cunning and lack of virtue, and offer the post of Guide as a chance to atone for past misdeeds and reduce their punishments in Hell.

To contact an ancestral Guide, a Scion needs a memorial tablet inscribed with the ancestor's name, preferably housed in an ornate shrine. To summon the ghost, burn an offering of incense and spend a point of Legend.

Immortals (Guide ••• to •••••)

Chinese legend includes its own versions of nymphs, the alfar and other nature-spirits, with no clear distinctions as to their categories; they are all just lesser shen. The word "immortal" instead refers to a wide variety of partially divinized humans. These immortals perform much of the Celestial Bureaucracy's scutwork, including service as Guides.

Earth Gods and City Gods

Some "immortals" are ghosts of mortals transformed into low-grade spirits as a reward for deeds of surpassing virtue. For instance, a civil servant who kills himself to protest the unjust policies of his superiors might receive appointment as the local City God (Cheng Huang). Other classes of minor spirits include the local Earth Gods (To Di) who report to the region's City God. A ghost brought into the Celestial Bureaucracy as a lesser immortal (Legend 3-5) is typically a three-dot Guide.

All these Earth Gods and City Gods report to Confucius, who after death became the Earth God for the Chinese state as a whole. Significantly, even though Chinese tradition ranks Confucius as equal to Laozi, the Buddha and even the Jade Emperor, he is still described as kuei (a ghost) rather than shen (a God).

Xian

Other immortals are Scions who never received a Visitation but nevertheless became famous sages, heroes and magicians. Through devoted practice of martial arts, asceticism, meditation or occultism, these Scions attained a minor degree of Legend. In life, such legendary mortals are called xian. A living xian is a three-dot Guide.

After death, the Celestial Bureaucracy transforms xians into lesser shen. Unlike Earth Gods and such ilk, however, divinized xians occasionally continue to gain Legend. A xian posthumously adopted as a shen (Legend 5-7) is typically worth four dots.

An immortal who achieved true divinity, such as the celebrated Eight Immortals, is worth five dots. Such exalted Guides tend to be Daoist masters of immense enlightenment, as well as Gods: They are notorious for telling Scions what they *need* to know for their own spiritual advancement, instead of what they *want* to know to get a job done.

Rules for Xian

You can write up a xian using the same character creation rules as for a heroic Scion, with these modifications: The xian receives only five dots to spend on Epic Attributes and Boons; the only permissible Purviews are the Special Purviews and the Pantheon-Specific Purview of Taiyi; and buying an additional dot of Legend costs 10 bonus points instead of 7. They have no favored Epic Attributes or Purviews. Xian gain experience points, but Legend, Epic Attributes, free-standing Knacks and Boons cost double the number of experience points as they do for a Scion.

In ancient times, xian sometimes became powerful enough to challenge demigods, though they could not actually make the transition as Scions do. Modern times are less friendly to Legend, so a xian cannot raise her Legend above 4.

RELICS

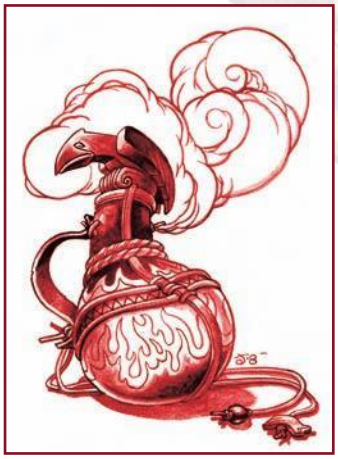
EXORCISTIC SWORD

Relic • • • or higher (2 Purviews, 1 Unique 1-Dot Power)

Chinese exorcists menace spirits with swords made of peach and plum wood, "cash swords" whose blade consists of coins strung on a loop of wire, or real swords engraved with the stars of the Big Dipper (this last called a Seven Stars Precious Sword). The shen make exorcistic swords that really work. Whatever their form, the sword inflicts damage on ghosts and other dematerialized spirits as if it were a spatha (**Scion: Hero** p. 202); the wooden or coin-swords do not inflict damage on material foes (except as lightweight truncheons). The sword does not itself enable its possessor to see spirits, but it can serve as a Birthright for channeling the Death and Magic Purviews. (To cast spells, a Scion would use the sword's point to trace mystic characters in the air.) An exorcistic sword could also carry bonus traits above the spatha template or could permit use of additional Purviews.

FIRE-CROW GOURD

Relic • • • • • (1 Purview, 1 Unique 4-Dot Power)

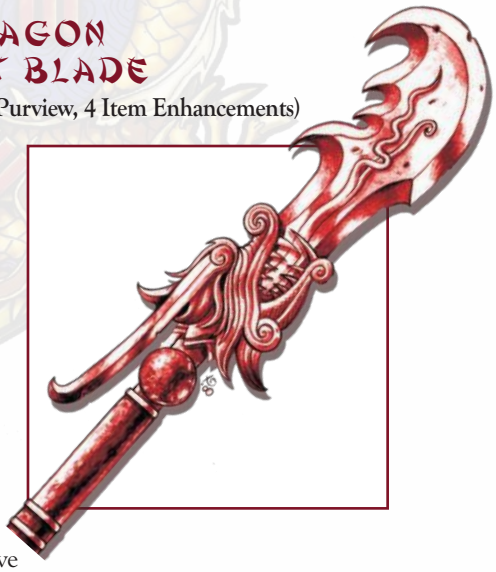


This potent yet unassuming item looks like a bottle made from an ordinary gourd. This bottle, however, holds a spirit called a fire-crow. The gourd's owner can uncork the bottle and call out the fire-crow to attack his enemies.

The fire-crow is just a special effect for a flame-based ranged attack that inflicts +4L damage, plus bonus levels of damage equal to the Scion's Legend (an attack comparable to the Sun • • • • Boon, Flare Missile). Each attack by the fire-crow costs a point of Legend. The magical gourd also permits a Scion to wield Fire Boons.

GREEN DRAGON CRESCENT BLADE

Relic • • • • • (1 Purview, 4 Item Enhancements)



The famed weapon that Jade Emperor Guan Yu wielded as a Scion is a polearm called a guan-dao; Westerners sometimes call it the "Chinese halberd." Guan Yu's weapon has +2L damage, +1 Accuracy and +1 Defense above the naginata template (**Scion: Hero**, p. 202); it also permits a Scion to use the War Purview. The respect that the Green Dragon Crescent Blade inspires in spirits obedient to the Celestial Bureaucracy is balanced by the hatred it inspires among servants of the Titans and other enemies of the shen.

Spirit Master's Seal

Relic • • • (3 Birthright Connections)

A Scion can have a wide variety of spirits as Creatures, Followers or Guides. A spirit master's seal enables the Scion to call spirits no matter what sort of Birthright represents them. The seal consists of a wood or stone cube three inches square, carved with archaic symbols. When the Scion wishes to summon spirits, she writes out an appropriate talisman on colored paper, stamps it with the seal, commands the spirit to appear and spends a point of Legend. The command typically ends with a phrase such as, "By imperial order!" or "Quickly, quickly! In accordance with the statutes and the protocols!" to remind the spirits that the Scion acts with the backing of even higher powers.

Xireng

Relic • • • • • (1 Purview, 1 Unique 4-Dot Power)

The legendary "Growing Earth" looks like an ordinary lump of mixed clay and loam, squeezed hard. It performs a limited version of Earth Creation (**Scion: God**, p. 87): It only creates compacted soil or clay. On the other hand, once a character acquires that Earth Boon, she may use the Xireng to produce unlimited quantities of rammed earth at no Legend cost at all. The Scion can shape the rammed earth as it appears to create simple shapes such as dikes or platforms. Xireng incidentally permits a Scion to channel the Earth Purview, but only works for a character who already knows at least one Earth Boon.

Scions of the Celestial Bureaucracy

The Scions of the Celestial Bureaucracy vary as much as the shen themselves. They can range from government bureaucrats to occult sages to butt-kicking kung fu fighters and master swordsmen. In fact, Scions of the shen tend to combine roles that Westerners find incongruous, such butt-kicking kung fu bureaucrat. Presented here as examples are two Scions of the Celestial Bureaucracy: Zheng Tan, a heroic-level Scion of Nüwa still learning to combine his training as an engineer with nascent divinity and occult power; and Tommy Li, a Scion of Sun Wukong first seen in **Scion: Hero** (p. 252), now graduated to demigod.

ZHENG TAN
SCION OF NÜWA

Zheng Tan had almost completed his Master's in electrical engineering at UCLA and looked forward to going home to Taiwan when he received his Visitation from Nüwa. The mender of the sky explained that a minor God in the Ministry of Thunder had taken the place of Tan's father for a time. Nüwa was adopting him as her foster-son because Tan's talents lay more in her direction. The Celestial Bureaucracy needed agents and Nüwa hoped Tan would see the value in not letting the Titans destroy the World. He did. The Goddess briefed him on the Overworld War, made a few adjustments to his notebook computer, introduced him to an ancestral spirit and told him that other shen and Scions would be in touch. To them he would be T'ien Sheng, the Lightning Sage.

Tan quickly figured out that far from being called to fight mighty battles against dread monsters, Nüwa recruited him as tech support for other Scions. A bit later, he found that tech support often meant field work, which was not safe at all. Tan has not settled into a Band, but he's already assisted several Scions and lesser immortals.

Although Tan's nascent powers focus on information, he is also a highly skilled engineer. Given time, he can prepare a battleground with a variety of electrical, incendiary and mechanical death-traps. (His usual strategy is for an ally to lure cultists or titanspawn into a trapped location, while Tan stands ready to throw the switch.) Since the forces of evil do not always obligingly fall for Tan's schemes or give Tan a chance to learn their goals and weaknesses, he also carries a Glock pistol and has become moderately good at using it. Tan also discovered a talent for Taiyi by approaching the Purview as a scientific study of forces. He has become quite skilled at boosting other Scions' Boons or countering the Boons of others.

The Lightning Sage is short, slight and quick, with black hair worn short. He fidgets, rapidly walks back and forth while thinking, and tends to speak in rapid technobabble. (Sometimes he makes it up just to see if anyone can tell the difference.) While he prefers to dress in a suit and tie as befits a serious-minded professional, he dons a gorgeously embroidered silk robe and hat when he must speak to his great-great-great-grandfather, or when dealing with particularly formal and old-fashioned spirits.

Roleplaying Hints: You exemplify the Celestial Bureaucracy's tradition of intellect and invention, carried into the twenty-first century. You try to research every situation, using any natural or supernatural sources of information available, from your ancestor to the World Wide Web: The better you know what the bad guys are up to, the better your chance of defeating them and saving the lives of your fellows and innocent bystanders. Most of all, though, you want to prove that technology is the key to defeating the Titans — especially when you encounter Scions of oafish Gods who think it's all about huge muscles and magic weapons. You carry a gun for occasions when plans don't work quite right, and might carry pepper spray or a taser for cases where enemies must be captured alive or you must get past people who don't actually deserve to die.

Birthrights: Nüwa gave the Lightning Sage's notebook a special chip made from the same paste of five-colored stones she used to mend the sky. It enables Tan to channel Magic, Moon, Mystery and Psychopomp Boons. He casts spells, for instance, by writing calligraphy on the touch-sensitive screen, while Mystery involves a simulated I Ching. Tan doesn't know any Moon Boons, but Nüwa thinks he might want to learn them someday.

Nüwa also gave Tan the embroidered robe of an ancestor who was a corrupt court official in the later Manchu dynasty. Said ancestor, Zheng Gongquan, recently completed his sentence in Di Yu and seeks to gain posthumous merit by helping his descendant. Gongquan has the social and political savvy that Tan largely lacks; his advice sometimes prevents Tan from making serious social gaffes. The old ghost also knows a great deal about demons and the Chinese Underworld, though painful experience. To summon Gongquan, Tan must wear his ancestor's robe and burn an offering of hell-money and gold paper.

SCION
HERO

Zheng Tan (Name)	Tech Support (Calling)	The Celestial Bureaucracy (Pantheon)
(Player)	Visionary (Nature)	Nüwa (God)

ZHENG TAN

ATTRIBUTES

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●○○○○○○○○	Charisma	●●○○○○○○○○	Perception	●●●○○○○○○○
Dexterity	●●●●○○○○○○	Manipulation	●●●○○○○○○○	Intelligence	●●●●○○○○○○
Stamina	●●○○○○○○○○	Appearance	●●○○○○○○○○	Wits	●●●●○○○○○○

ABILITIES

■ Academics	●●●○○	■ Craft (Mechanical Engineering)	●●●○○	□ Melee	●○○○○
□ Animal Ken	○○○○○	■ Craft (Incendiaries)	●○○○○	□ Occult	●○○○○
□ Art	○○○○○	□	○○○○○	□ Politics	○○○○○
□	○○○○○	□ Empathy	●○○○○	□ Presence	○○○○○
□ Athletics	●○○○○	□ Fortitude	○○○○○	■ Science (Electrical Engineering)	●●●○○
■ Awareness	●●●○○	■ Integrity	●●○○○	□	○○○○○
□ Brawl	○○○○○	■ Investigation	●●●○○	□	○○○○○
□ Command	○○○○○	□ Larceny	●●○○○	□ Stealth	●●○○○
□ Control	○○○○○	□ Marksmanship	●●●○○	□ Survival	○○○○○
□	○○○○○	□ Medicine	○○○○○	□ Thrown	○○○○○

BIRTHRIGHTS

Guide (ancestral ghost) 3, Relic (Notebook Computer – Magic, Moon, Mystery, Psychopomp) 4, Relic (Court Robe) 1

WEAPONS

Glock: Acc 8, Dmg 3L-P, Rng 20, Clip 15, Speed 4

KNACKS

Damage Conversion, Know-It-All, Math Genius, Trick Shooter

BOONS

Five-Cycle Augmentation, Magic 1, Mystery 1, Where Are You?, Yin-Yang Destruction

Spells: The Unlidded Eye

WILLPOWER

●●●●●●○○○○

□□□□□□□□□□

SOAK

A 1 L 4 B 5

ARMOR

Bulletproof Vest

A ____ L 2 B 2

HEALTH

0	-1	-1	-2	-2	-4	I
□	□	□	□	□	□	□

VIRTUES

Duty	●●○○○
Harmony	●●○○○
Intellect	●●●○○
Valor	●○○○○

LEGEND

●●●○○○

○○○○○○

Legend Points 9 | ____

EXPERIENCE

TOMMY LI
SCION OF SUN WUKONG

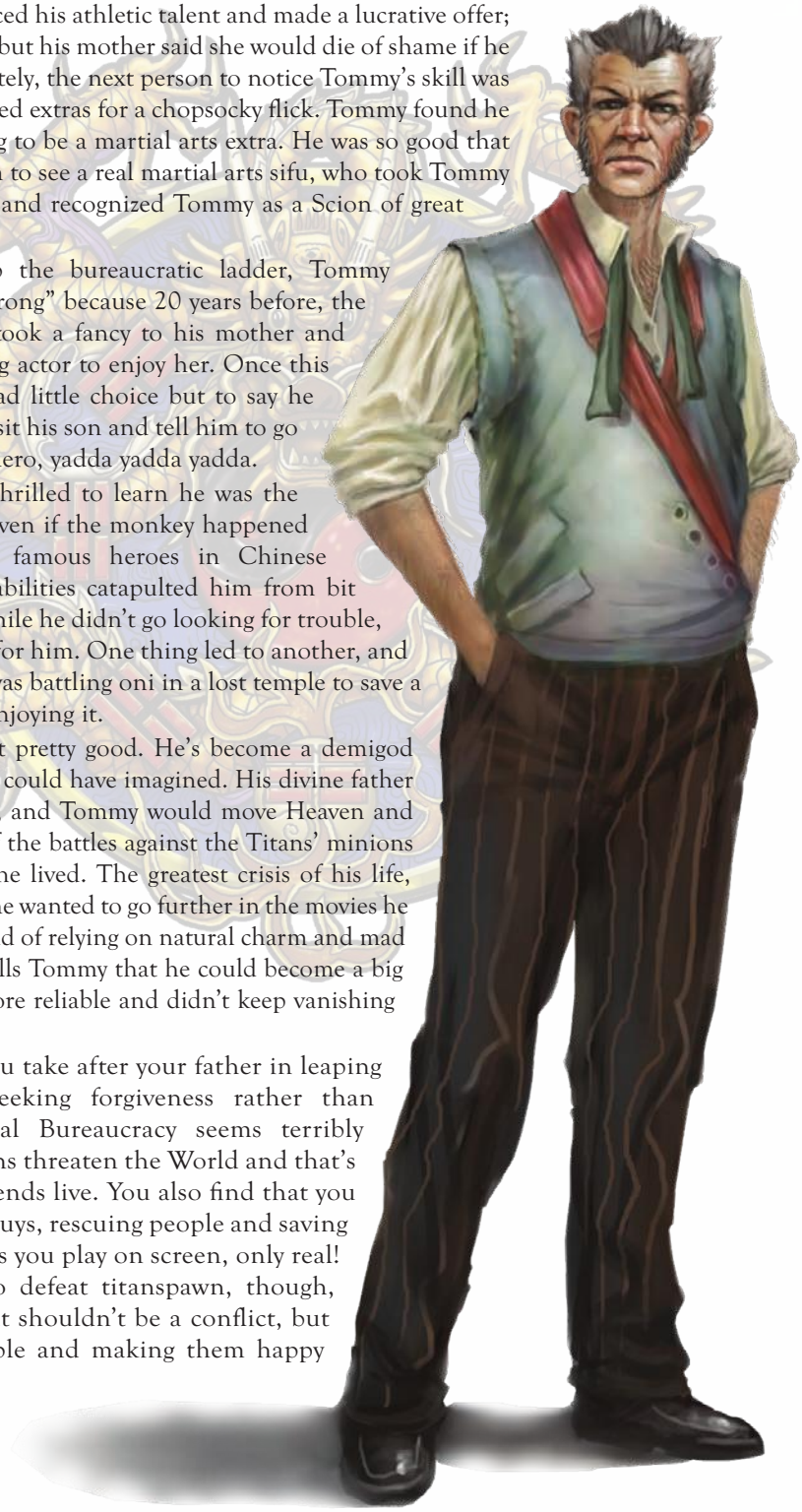
Tommy Li got in trouble a lot on the streets of Hong Kong. His parents were very poor, and his father drank. Tommy became adept at grabbing fruit, fish and other groceries from market stalls and running and climbing away. First one of the Triads noticed his athletic talent and made a lucrative offer; Tommy was sorely tempted but his mother said she would die of shame if he became a gangster. Fortunately, the next person to notice Tommy's skill was a casting director who needed extras for a chopsocky flick. Tommy found he was very good at pretending to be a martial arts extra. He was so good that the fighting coach took him to see a real martial arts sifu, who took Tommy to *his* sifu, who was a xian and recognized Tommy as a Scion of great potential power.

Once word passed up the bureaucratic ladder, Tommy learned that "his Qi was strong" because 20 years before, the Handsome Monkey King took a fancy to his mother and posed as a handsome young actor to enjoy her. Once this came out, Sun Wukong had little choice but to say he meant to father a Scion, Visit his son and tell him to go out, fight the Titans, be a hero, yadda yadda yadda.

Tommy was less than thrilled to learn he was the bastard son of a monkey, even if the monkey happened to be one of the most famous heroes in Chinese mythology. Still, his new abilities catapulted him from bit player to minor star; and while he didn't go looking for trouble, it seemed to come looking for him. One thing led to another, and before Tommy knew it he was battling oni in a lost temple to save a fairy princess, and rather enjoying it.

Tommy thinks he has it pretty good. He's become a demigod and more powerful than he could have imagined. His divine father turned out to be a fun guy, and Tommy would move Heaven and Earth to help him. Some of the battles against the Titans' minions were pretty dire but, well, he lived. The greatest crisis of his life, really, was accepting that if he wanted to go further in the movies he needed to learn to act instead of relying on natural charm and mad kung fu talent. His agent tells Tommy that he could become a big star now if only he were more reliable and didn't keep vanishing for weeks at a time.

Roleplaying Hints: You take after your father in leaping before you look and seeking forgiveness rather than permission. The Celestial Bureaucracy seems terribly stuffy to you, but the Titans threaten the World and that's where your family and friends live. You also find that you enjoy standing up to bad guys, rescuing people and saving the day. It's like the heroes you play on screen, only real! As much as you want to defeat titanspawn, though, you also enjoy show biz. It shouldn't be a conflict, but doesn't entertaining people and making them happy matter too?



Birthrights: Sun Wukong first gave his son a piece of his own size-changing staff, the Ru Yi Jin Gu Bang, which became a complete staff in turn. Not only does Tommy's staff function as an indestructible bo staff, it also allows him to channel Sky and War Boons and can grow and shrink up to 100% per dot of its wielder's Legend (so Tommy can make it six times longer and/or thicker, or one-sixth its normal size).

On a cord around his neck, Tommy wears a shard of the stone egg from which the Handsome Monkey King hatched; this enables him to channel Chaos Boons. To celebrate his son becoming a demigod, Sun Wukong scrounged around the back of his closet and found three more minor Relics to add to the necklace: A pit from one of the Peaches of Immortality (for Health); a Reginnaglar, or sacred nail from a Norse temple (Guardian; it came from a temple of Thor); and a little Egyptian cameo of a baboon (originally a Relic of Thoth, for the Animal Purview). The latter two items are (of course) stolen; members of the Aesir and Pesedjet might not like their repurposing to the Celestial Bureaucracy. Tommy doesn't have any Boons for these Purviews but what the heck, he might want to learn them someday.

Sun Wukong also gave his son a Qilin (the same Creature that the Amatsukami mispronounce as Kirin; see **Scion: Hero**, p. 326). Tommy has endless trouble moving this mythical beast about the World without people realizing that it shouldn't exist. He gets no help whatsoever from his agent Denning Quan, whom he hasn't told about the whole Scion thing; but Tommy's developed a small Internet fan club that's willing to try answering whatever strange question he puts to them, and thus functions as a one-dot Guide.

SCION
DEMIGOD

Name	Calling	Pantheon
Tommy Li	Wuxia Hero	The Celestial Bureaucracy
Player	**Nature**	**God**
	Rogue	Sun Wukong

TOMMY LI

ATTRIBUTES

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●●●●○○○○○	Charisma	●●●●●○○○○○	Perception	●●○○○○○○○○
Dexterity	●●●●●●○○○○	Manipulation	●●○○○○○○○○	Intelligence	●●○○○○○○○○
Stamina	●●●●○○○○○○	Appearance	●●●○○○○○○○	Wits	●●●●○○○○○○

ABILITIES

☐ Academics	○○○○○	☐ Craft	○○○○○	■ Melee	●●●●○
☐ Animal Ken	●●○○○	☐	○○○○○	☐ Occult	●○○○○
☐ Art (Acting)	●○○○○	☐	○○○○○	☐ Politics	○○○○○
☐	○○○○○	☐ Empathy	○○○○○	☐ Presence	●●○○○
■ Athletics	●●●●●	■ Fortitude	●●●○○	☐ Science	○○○○○
☐ Awareness	●●●○○	☐ Integrity	●●○○○	☐	○○○○○
■ Brawl	●●●●●	☐ Investigation	○○○○○	☐	○○○○○
☐ Command	○○○○○	■ Larceny	●●●○○	■ Stealth	●●●○○
☐ Control (Car)	●●○○○	☐ Marksmanship	○○○○○	☐ Survival	●○○○○
☐	○○○○○	☐ Medicine	○○○○○	☐ Thrown	●○○○○

BIRTHRIGHTS

Creature (Qilin) 5, Guide (Fan Club) 1, Relic (Ru Yi Jin Gu Bang – Sky, War) 4, Relic (Stone Shard – Chaos) 1, Relic (Peach Pit – Health) 1, Relic (Reginnaglar – Guardian) 1, Relic (Cameo – Animal) 1

WEAPONS

Ru Yi Jin Gu Bang: Acc 12, Dmg 8B, Parry DV 6, Sp 6

KNACKS

Armor Crusher, Cat's Grace, Divine Balance, Divine Fortitude, Divine Rampage, Holy Bound, Holy Fortitude, Holy Rampage, Inner Furnace, Knockback Attack, Lightning Sprinter, Monkey Climber, Never Say Die, Omnidexterity, Rabbit Reflexes, Self-Healing

BOONS

Battle Cry, Five-Cycle Augmentation, Hornet's Nest, Paralyzing Confusion, Sky's Grace, Warrior Ideal (Martial Arts Hero)

WILLPOWER

●●●●●●●○○○

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

SOAK

A 4 L 10 B 12

ARMOR

None

A____ L____ B____

EXPERIENCE

VIRTUES

Harmony	●○○○○
Intellect	●○○○○
Loyalty	●●●●○
Valor	●●●○○

LEGEND

●●●●●●○○○○○○ 36 Legend Points

HEALTH

0	0	0	0	0	-4	I
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	☐	☐	☐	☐		
	☐					

COSMOLOGY

The Celestial Bureaucracy possesses enormous swaths of otherworldly real estate. Not only does it rule sprawling and complex realms in the Overworld and Underworld, it took over mystic locations associated with China's lesser ethnic groups. Gods, their Scions and other creatures of Legend also created their own locations in various Worlds.

The cosmology of Chinese myth changed repeatedly over the millennia, as the pantheon itself changed, mortals adopted new ideas and celestial commissions evaluated those doctrines for their utility. Daoism, Confucianism and Buddhism all left their imprint on the otherworlds of the Celestial Bureaucracy. Until the escape of the Titans, the Gods believed they would never again make major changes. Oh, they might update their supernaturally-simulated technology so the offices communicated by telephone, fax or email instead of courier-spirits, but the procedures and traditions were set.

Then the Titans escaped and smashed the sprawling Chinese Underworld into separate realms. One realm, at least, needs significant repair. The Jade Emperor speaks of a thorough review of procedures, the better to deal with the current crisis. Guan Yu always refers back to classical precedents when he wants to do something new, but still.... Some Gods uneasily wonder how far any reform might go, once ancient traditions — and comfortable bureaucratic sinecures — come under scrutiny.

Describing all the sub-realms, terra incognita and strange locations would fill an entire book. In fact, it does: The *Shanhaijing*, or *Classic of Mountains and Seas*, briefly mentions many of the legendary places in and beyond ancient China. The *Shanhaijing* is millennia out of date, though. The Celestial Bureaucracy commissions a new edition every few centuries, but keeps it from mortals.

PLACES OF LEGEND

STRANGE LOCATION: THE QINSHIHUANG NECROPOLIS

In 1974, peasants digging a well near the ancient Chinese capital of Xi'an dug into long-forgotten pits holding thousands of pottery figures of soldiers and horses. They discovered the tomb complex of Qinshihuang, the first historical emperor of China. Many despots ruled wider empires and some had bloodier reigns, but no tyrant ever shaped a culture so completely as did Qinshihuang. The Chinese people do not love their First Emperor, but they know he matters in a way that very few people have mattered more than 2,000 years after their death.

After decades of slow, careful excavation, Chinese archeologists found about 7,000 terracotta figures — each one apparently an individual portrait of a real soldier — plus complete metal chariots, intact weapons, tombs for the First Emperor's nobles and a complex of offices for the Emperor's bureaucrats in the afterlife. Legend says the emperor's own tomb, buried under a nearby hill, contains a relief map of China with rivers, lakes and seas of mercury, jewels set in the ceiling as a map of the stars, crossbow traps to kill grave robbers, and treasures to beggar the imagination. Archeologists have not yet dug into the tomb, but chemical analysis of the huge grave-mound's soil shows elevated levels of mercury.

The shen know that the souls of Qinshihuang's soldiers sleep in their clay effigies, ready to bring them to life at their Emperor's command. The Celestial Bureaucracy also used Death and Guardian Boons to place powerful wards around Qinshihuang's tomb, to make sure that day never comes. Qinshihuang reached too far, tried to become an immortal God, broke China to his will without regard for his own duty or cosmic harmony and burned every book he could find so the people would know nothing except what he told them. He now rules a private Underworld realm, a perfect copy of China where mercury rivers flow beneath unchanging stars. He is all alone, emperor of no one.

Nevertheless, Gods who visit the museum built around the Terracotta Army can imbibe the Legend that clings to the First Emperor's tomb. The Celestial Bureaucracy also collected 3,000 of the clay warriors before the archeologists found them, and awakened them to serve Heaven. See pp. 100-101 for a description of these skilled warrior colossi.

TERRA INCOGNITA: PENGLAI

Chinese legends mention three fabulous floating islands inhabited by millions of immortals. (Originally there were five islands, but two of them sank because of a Titan's wicked deeds.) Some legends placed the islands in a gigantic, otherworldly ocean to the east. Explorers and later scholars thought the three magic islands of Penglai, Fengzhang and Yingzhou were just fanciful versions of Japan or Taiwan.

In Penglai City, on the coast of Shandong province, people say their town is the source of the myth and even point to a scenic location in the city where the famous Eight Immortals landed. On some days, you can see the three islands out in the sea, though skeptics say they are mirages.

Almost needless to say, the skeptics are wrong and the fabled islands really exist among the other islands in the Straight of Bohai. They are too supernatural to exist in the World, but creatures of Legend can come and go. When they do, the islands become visible for a few minutes. Unwary mortals might pass to Penglai at that time. Their boat's disappearance from the ordinary World explains the legend that the islands are surrounded by "weak water" on which nothing will float.

The myths do exaggerate the size of the fabled islands: None of the mountainous islands are more than a few miles across. They are beautiful places, though, adorned with ever-blooming flowers and magical trees such as the Pearly-Garnet Tree, whose original stock came from Kunlun. All the animals on the islands are pure white. The fruit and seeds of the magical plants render the inhabitants immortal, or at least unaging. (Treat the Pearly-Garnet Tree fruit, for instance, as equal to the Golden Apples of Youth; see p. 111 of **Scion: Demigod**.) They are all sages or actual lesser immortals and live in pavilions of gold and jade. Gods of the Celestial Bureaucracy visit regularly, since the highest peak of the mountainous islands holds an axis mundi to the pantheon's Overworld realm. The inhabitants are a bit suspicious of visitors from the World, though, since the Amatsukami invaded and occupied the islands during World War Two.

Touchstone: The Greater Wall

Everyone knows about the Great Wall of China. You can't actually see it from the moon (it's far too narrow), but it is beyond a doubt the most immense feat of construction in recorded history. Historians argue how well it succeeded at discouraging barbarian invasions, and some revisionists suggest the First Emperor built it from pure superstition, to block evil spiritual influences from the north. Later dynasties expanded and upgraded the wall, however, and posted soldiers — not what you'd expect for a work of magic and imperial folly.

Indeed, fortified cross-country walls have a long and successful history at keeping enemies out or disgruntled populations in. Hadrian's Wall kept the early Scots out of Roman Britain, while other Roman walls guarded other frontiers. More recently, the Berlin Wall kept East Germans from escaping. Botswana built a barbed-wire fence across its border to keep out hundreds of thousands of Zimbabweans fleeing their country's economic collapse.

All these walls and fences connect to the Greater Wall in the Overworld. The Wall is the archetypal barrier between civilization and barbarism (however its builders may define those concepts). Creatures of Legend merely need to touch one of the famous border-walls or fences in the World, past or present, and spend a point of Legend to reach the Greater Wall in the Overworld.

The Greater Wall looks like its oldest, largest and most famous analogue in the World, the Great Wall of China, though even more impressive: 30 feet high and 20 feet wide, all solid masonry, with 40-foot high square towers every five miles. The barbed wire along the parapet is a new touch. The local terrain resembles wherever the traveler came from; by walking along the Greater Wall for an hour and concentrating on a location in the World, a traveler can reach a section of

the Greater Wall that connects to another Touchstone. For instance, a Scion could start in the mountains of China, walk along the top of the Greater Wall until she reached desert, and return to the World at a section of Mexican border fence.

Alternatively, the visitor can concentrate on the other side of the Greater Wall and walk an hour to the primal outlands of ultimate barbarism: the Titan-realms. Terra, Muspelheim and most other Titan-realms can be reached using the Greater Wall, but the trip is one way. Once you jump off into the storms of Ehekatoyaatl or the sun-blasted wastes of Akhetaten, you can't return to the Greater Wall. Visitors cannot reach Hundun, though, for the Titan of Chaos has not physically impinged on any Godrealms: Some dangers just can't be walled away.

The Celestial Bureaucracy garrisoned the Greater Wall for centuries. Representatives of other pantheons who wanted to use the Greater Wall for rapid transit about the World had to pay a hefty fee for travel papers (or, more usually, bribe local guards for those permits). Since the escape of the Titans, security has tightened a great deal and the Bureaucracy no longer grants travel permits without a request signed by a pantheon's ruling God. Other pantheons are distinctly unhappy that the Bureaucracy has thousands of armed lesser immortals within an hour's walk of their turf in the World, but at present they can do nothing about it.

UNDERWORLD: DI YU

The oldest Chinese conception of the Underworld was of a dark, subterranean counterpart to the mortal World. As the Celestial Bureaucracy absorbed the pantheons of conquered cultures, it merged their ghost-countries into their own. Much later, Buddhism added notions of reward, punishment and reincarnation. The Celestial Bureaucracy gladly reorganized its Underworld to fit Buddhist notions. Not only did the Gods not want to risk losing souls to the imported faith, Legalist and more hard-core Confucian Gods liked the idea of thoroughly examining souls, recording their deeds in minute detail and assigning suitable rewards and punishments. The Underworld became even more bureaucratized than the pantheon's Godrealm.

Some Gods decried the newfangled practice of reincarnation: Ancestral souls should stay available for worship forever, because that was *tradition*. However, the Jade Emperor and his advisors pointed out that after some millennia their Underworld was full to bursting. Population forecasts suggested the Underworld would eventually gain ghosts faster than it could expand to hold them. Anyway, few spirits were remembered and revered more than a few centuries, so clearing them out would not deprive their descendants.

The Underworld was once called Huang Quan, or Yellow Springs — a name imitated by the Japanese Gods. After the reorganization, the Celestial Bureaucracy's Underworld became Di Yu, the Earth Prison. Spirits that still had descendants to offer reverence to them could stay in the old ghost-countries as long as they wanted, but others received a limit of three generations. After that (with a few special exceptions) they had to reincarnate. Before anything else, however, the dead would be judged — and punished, if their sins were sufficiently severe. No ghost would leave the Earth Prison until it paid in full for its misdeeds in life, and then it would receive a new existence based on those deeds.

The system of penance and reincarnation slowed the growth of the Underworld's population. At the last census, Di Yu held 9.2 billion ghosts. Over the millennia, there have been a *lot* of dead Chinese.

When the Titans escaped, Di Yu cracked along the sutures between the primeval ghost-countries. The First, Fourth and Fifth Courts float isolated in the dimensional chaos of the Underworld; the Second and Third, Sixth, Seventh and Eighth, and Ninth and Tenth Court drift as blocs that remain connected for now. At least a billion souls were lost outright to oblivion, and an unknown number escaped to haunt the mortal World as unauthorized ghosts. The Gods' servants work double shifts to recover them. Attacks from diverse Titans, however, leave the pantheon little time and resources to work on rebuilding Di Yu.

The shen are also uncomfortably aware that most of Di Yu's staff consists of demons. The Gods feel sure of the loyalty of the Oxheads and Horsefaces, but not the rest. On top of all their other problems, the Gods need to spy on their own minions.

THE TEN COURTS

Di Yu consists of 10 immense caverns, each one big enough to hold a good-sized country. Each cavern holds a complex of offices and prisons built on a design of concentric or variously-divided rectangles, just like a classical Chinese city in the mortal World. These are the Courts that examine the dead and administer their rewards or punishments. Despite the vast size of the caverns, the passages from one Court to another are short enough that a person could walk the entire series in a few hours, if she had the proper travel permits.

The First Court is Di Yu's reception area. Since it receives all the dead, it requires the largest offices. Indeed, its halls form an entire city devoted to judging the dead called Fengdu. Demons herd the dead into lines based on their status and occupation in life, and upper-class people naturally receive quicker service than common folk. Since "service" means assignment to torture, though, no one in the lower-class lines finds this too unfair. So far, the First Court's administration stubbornly refuses to update its categories, so demons wait at the doorways for noblemen and other classes now defunct in modern Taiwan, the People's Republic and the Chinese Diaspora, while clerks try to work out the proper categories for software engineers and other new occupations.

Once a soul signs in and receives a case number, she goes to the Office of Past Lives to stand before the Mirror of Recollection. This huge enchanted mirror reflects the person's past, including previous incarnations, and reveals any meritorious deeds and unexpiated sins. Clerks record everything. Demon magistrates examine the record of sins and send the soul to the appropriate Court and prison, or hell, for punishment. Some hells punish very specific offenses; others punish general wickedness. If the person's merits exceed her faults, she can go to the Tenth Court for immediate reincarnation, or linger in the first cavern-realm as an ancestral spirit. The First Court keeps a file on every soul that passes through, going back at least 15 centuries, and by examining past lives it has spotty coverage back to the Zhou Dynasty.

Fengdu also contains one rather special hell of its own. This hell, called Bu Jing Suo, exists to punish priests, monks, nuns and other religious professionals who did not perform rituals for which they were paid, or who performed them in a careless fashion. Bu Jing Suo consists of an immense, cold, drafty and pitch-black hall where the sinners must copy the appropriate holy scriptures. Their only light comes from a tiny lamp whose wick is a single thread.

The Titans' escape broke the First Court's cavern from the rest. Since they cannot receive their proper punishment, the clerks try to find them lodgings with ghosts who dwell in the rest of the cavern. Ancestral spirits possess nothing except what their descendants send them as burnt offerings. The Celestial Bureaucracy wills it that burnt models of objects become the real items in Di Yu, so ghosts with reverent descendants can have nice homes, automobiles, wide-screen plasma TVs and other amenities. However, these items only exist in Di Yu, have no supernatural powers (aside from the fact that they exist and function) and disappear if mortals cease to revere the ghost.

The Second through Eighth Courts each hold a large central prison and 16 smaller prison-hells for specific offenses. Punishments typically involve various forms of wounding, up to sawing in half or complete dismemberment, though every conceivable means of causing pain is used somewhere in Di Yu. All the punishments in these Courts, however, are finite. A sentence may take centuries to complete, but it does end, and then the soul can move on to the Tenth Court — or could. The caverns of these Courts are inhabited by ghosts that completed their sentence but still have ancestors who honor them.

The Ninth Court is the most feared, for it alone was permanent — and unjust. Once it received the souls of suicides and people who died too soon, no matter what the cause. Most particularly, it received the souls of people who had no descendants to honor them with offerings, or who died in ways that prevented a proper funeral. These were the hungry ghosts, condemned more often than not for mere bad luck. These unfortunate souls were simply sent out into the cavern's dreary expanse to... do nothing. However, the Court also includes hells for the sinners who committed the ultimate crime of serving the Titans: the spectres (**Scion: Hero**, pp. 292-293).

The Tenth Court holds the Office of Reincarnation. First, the demonic clerks and magistrates determine what new life a person should receive, based on her deeds in her previous lives. Virtuous people can be reborn into wealthy or otherwise privileged circumstances.

People who led mean-spirited, wicked lives are reborn in poor or otherwise unfortunate circumstances, as animals or even as demons to stay in Di Yu. They pass to the cottage of Granny Meng (she refuses to permit any updating of her facility) where this lesser God feeds them the Broth of Oblivion that wipes away memories of the previous life and existence in Di Yu. At last, the amnesiac soul marches into the vast, spinning Wheel of Reincarnation that whirls it back to the World and a new body.

The dismemberment of Di Yu interrupted the cycle of punishment and reincarnation. The only souls that could reach the Tenth Court weren't supposed to; the souls that should have entered the Wheel were stranded in other fragments of the Underworld. The war against the Titans seldom leaves time for psychopomp Gods to ferry convoys of souls from the other fragments to the Tenth Court.

What's worse, the cataclysmic escape of the Titans broke the lesser prisons of the spectres. Hordes of the damned now lay siege to the Tenth Court. If they can seize the Office of Reincarnation, they can be born into the World in whatever lives they want — from newly-born nemean beasts to the children of tycoons and government officials — with full knowledge of their past lives and their worshipful service to the Titans. The Celestial Bureaucracy believes this is the worst thing that could happen to the World, short of nuclear war or an assault on humanity by the Titans themselves. The Tenth Court is now one of the main battle-fronts in the war against the Titans. The shen send all the warriors they can spare; but the Titans send increasingly powerful minions of their own, as they become aware of the Tenth Court's strategic importance.

And what of the hungry ghosts in the Ninth Court? Yanluo would like to rescind their eternal sentence and send them through the Wheel. Never mind assigning special incarnations; let Fate itself choose new lives for them. The Jade Emperor, however, forbids this. Guan Yu judges that the risk is too great of spectres posing as hungry ghosts to infiltrate the Tenth Court. Yanluo counters that the spectres already recruit resentful hungry ghosts by promising them escape: If the Celestial Bureaucracy does not show them mercy, the hungry ghosts shall multiply the spectres' numbers a hundredfold.

SAMPLE HELLS

It has been truly said: The Chinese have a lot of hells. These are only a few examples.

Heart-Gouging Prison: People who were stubborn, jealous, bigoted, cruel, treacherous, lewd or otherwise had lawless hearts have their chest split open and heart removed.

Ordure Pool: Prostitutes, pimps, smugglers, swindlers, womanizers, gangsters and their bodyguards, defaulters and deliberate bankrupts, bribed officials and crooked building contractors all wallow neck-deep in pits of dung.

Prison of Boiling Water: Thieves and robbers have their hands nailed to wooden frames and splashed with boiling water. If they cry out, they are beaten with rattan canes.

Prison of Forced Drinking of Medicine: Medical quacks must drink pails of disgusting potions.

Prison of Red-Hot Bricks: A whole building made of red-hot brick, for glory-seekers, exploiters of others' misfortune and sycophants who worship the rich and despise the poor. The worse their sins, the hotter the bricks they must walk upon.

Prison of Scooped Eyes: Peeping Toms, readers of pornography, proud people who "looked down on" other folk, students who cheat by looking at others' examination papers and other sinners with "dirty eyes" are strapped to posts and have their eyes gouged out with iron forks and replaced three times daily.

Small Prison for Amputating Limbs: Reserved for robbers and killers.

Small Prison of Barbed Netting, Locusts and Leeches: Corrupt officials and extortionists crawl between two layers of barbed-wire netting while leeches and locusts feed on their blood and brains.

Small Prison for Reckless Drivers of Motor Vehicles: A new prison. People who kill others through reckless driving must pull cartloads of bricks, barefoot, over sharp stones.

A-Bi Diyu, the Hell of No Escape: The Ninth Court's prison for spectres, both those who served the Titans in life and those corrupted after death. They are cast into a pitch-black, labyrinthine cave full of sharp spikes and hot mud… or were, before the breakout.

THE YAMA KINGS

Yanluo has nine lesser death-Gods as assistants. Together they are called the 10 Yama Kings, the supreme tribunal of Di Yu. Each of them oversees one of the Courts. For a time, Yanluo was in eclipse and demoted to running the Fifth Court, but Guan Yu promoted him once more to the First Court and overall leadership of the Yama Kings.

Each of the Yama Kings looks much like Yanluo himself, a Chinese man with ebon skin, dressed in magnificent robes of pitch black or stark white, depending on the Yama King's mood. There's some turnover among Yama Kings, but the current roster consists of Chu Jiang, Song Di, Wu Guan, Qin Guang, Bian Cheng, Tai Shan and Ping Deng; they all bear the honorific "Wang" after their names. Du Shi Wang, king of the Ninth Court, was destroyed in the eruption of the spectres and has not yet been replaced. They are all Gods with Legends of 10 or 11; Yanluo adopts any Scions they sire.

PASSAGES

If they are not held for punishment, ghosts move easily and frequently between Di Yu and the mortal World. If fact, they are expected to visit their living descendants and reward their filial piety or punish any lack thereof. A grave can act as a passage for the ghost of the person buried there, and not for anyone else.

The living have greater difficulty passing between Worlds. A few graves — typically tombs of aristocrats or great generals — may become general passages, and Scions can use them if they have some way to physically enter the tomb. Such special graves can be located by searching for legends about masses of ghosts erupting from the tomb, perhaps to fight armies of other ghosts. Tales also describe voices being heard around such graves, and eerie glows resembling blue fire.

If necessary, a Scion of the Celestial Bureaucracy can make a passage by having herself coffined and buried with full traditional rites. When a demon-bailiff from Di Yu comes to collect her soul, she must overpower it or bribe it to conduct her bodily into the Underworld, while spending a point of Legend to make this possible. Note, however, that this process does not enable the Scion to *return* at will: For that, she must find a pre-existing passage out. Failing that, if she can reach the Tenth Court she can grab the Wheel of Reincarnation and jump through it, to appear in a random location somewhere in the World, next to a just-born infant to whom she shall be forever Fatebound at a strength of at least 4.

Legend speaks of other permanent passages. Somewhere in Sichuan, for instance, is a well that leads directly to Di Yu. Local priests used to have the townsfolk throw large sums of paper money down the well, until a brave mandarin descended and learned from Guan Yu himself that this was not necessary.

The south of Kwangsi Province holds two passes through the mountains that were both once called Ghost Gate Pass. Later scholars said this was just superstitious confusion because the word "kuei" can mean either "ghost" or "cassia tree" and really, these were just the Cassia Gate Passes. The skeptical scholars were wrong, of course: They really are gates to the Underworld, available to anyone with Legend (though they only work at night). China holds several other uncanny locations that can lead to the Underworld as well.

Mortals — even Scions — are not supposed to visit the Underworld, though. Visitors may be detained indefinitely, judged and punished by the Courts unless they can present authorization papers from a Celestial office, or come up with a damn good bluff or bribe. Imperial censors and other high officials of the mortal Chinese Empire also had the right to visit the Underworld on inspection tours and similar business. The governments of both the People's Republic and Taiwan both inherited this privilege, but do not know of it (yet).

Godrealm: Tian

The Celestial Bureaucracy occupies an expansive and intricate realm in the Overworld, with many divisions and subrealms. Overall, its name is simply Tian, "Heaven," the realm of the sky and celestial bodies. Some division of Tian are so large and important, however, that mortals often imagine them as completely separate or alternative Godrealms.

At first glance, Tian itself looks like an idealized version of China. Rivers flow through fertile fields and between forested hills and mountains. All manner of birds and beasts live in Tian as well as the Gods and lesser immortals themselves.

A closer look, however, reveals the Godrealm's celestial character. Jewels form the gravel in the riverbeds. The largest river flows with stars instead of water; mortals know it as the Milky Way. The birds sing in harmony with orchestral precision. Delicate perfume scents the air. The flowers, grass and trees are made of ivory, gold, lapis lazuli or other precious substances. Phoenixes, unicorns and other mythic creatures roam freely, while dragons sport in the rivers and among the clouds. Many creatures have human faces or other strange fusions of different human and animal features.

The cities of Tian correspond with the stars in the Big and Little Dippers. Heaven's capital corresponds to the Pole Star. These cities consist entirely of palace-temples built of cinnamon and sandalwood, precious metals and gems. Here dwell the Gods and the spirits who assist them in the Celestial Bureaucracy. Like the Forbidden City of Beijing or earlier imperial compounds, each city of Heaven is built on a plan of concentric rectangles. The Jade Emperor's palace, called the Purple Forbidden Enclosure of Heaven, occupies the center of the pole-star capital, the city of Tian Shu, or Celestial Pivot.

Kunlun Mountain

All this celestial magnificence occupies the top of a mountain called Kunlun. To reach Tian from elsewhere in the Overworld, one must pass a mountain range of fire, then a black river that circles Kunlun's base. This river Ruoshui, the Weak Water, lacks buoyancy: It will not float so much as a feather, so anyone who tries to swim across will drown. The base of Kunlun is 800 li (248 miles) square, and the mountain rises higher than non-divine eyes could see.

Kunlun rises in three tiers, each with wonders of its own. The lowest tier, Liangfeng Shan (Cool Wind Mountain) is quite wild, rugged and forested. The Cinnabar River flows through the crags and caverns of this level; its water staves off death, no matter how sick or gravely injured the imbiber may be. Pincao Grass makes those who eat it happy and forgetful of their troubles. Anyone who eats the wood of the waterproof Shatang Tree will never sink in water. Magical white cranes guard a special grass that can restore life to the dead, if brewed into a tea and fed to the corpse within an hour after death. Each face of Liangfeng Shan, in turn, is its own subrealm, with its own axis mundi to the mortal World.

Various half-divine creatures live on this tier. These include the beast Tulou, who looks like a sheep with four horns and eats human beings; Qinyuan, a bee the size of a mandarin duck, with a deadly sting; six-headed birds; and mundane-seeming snakes and panthers. Many sages rendered immortal by the Gods live on Liangfeng, too, dwelling in alabaster caves or graceful pavilions of jade while they perfect their understanding of the Dao. The God called Immortal Grandfather of the South Pole oversees this level of Kunlun.

The second tier, Xuanpu (Suspended Garden) holds even greater wonders. Here grow trees of jade and pearl, and Xiwangmu's peach trees of immortality; the God herself acts as this tier's chatelaine. A magical grain called Muhe (Tree Grain) also grows here, on stalks 40 feet tall and five handspans wide. For meat, the lesser immortals who live on Xuanpu have Shirou (Seeing Flesh), a substance shaped like a cow's liver with two eyes. No matter how much Shirou is eaten, it grows back instantly. Despite Shirou's somewhat disturbing appearance, it is the finest of meats. Many terraces and gazebos overlook the mountain slopes, each one offering a view more beautiful and magnificent than the last.

At Kunlun's summit is a wall of jade, with nine wells and nine gates, all guarded simultaneously by the God-beast Kaiming (Enlightenment), who resembles an immense tiger with nine tails and nine heads with human faces. Beyond the gates lies the third tier: the expanses of Heaven, as wide as the World itself.

Subrealms

Tian experiences seasons and weather just like those in the mortal World. It also has its own sun and moon. These, however, are at once subrealms and living creatures. During the night, the sun of Tian turns into a three-legged crow that perches on the branch of a giant cinnamon tree at the eastern limit of Heaven. To reach the sun-realm, however, one must fly up into the sky of Tian and ask the luminous crow for permission to enter.

The sun-realm is an ever-luminous world of gold, fire and shining jewels. Here trees of burning gold grow beside

lakes of ruby, diamond and topaz, or rivers of liquid fire. The God Houyi rules this subrealm from a magnificent golden palace he designed and built himself.

The moon-realm is a world of shadows, ice and silver, with forests of cinnamon trees and pools of liquid crystal and pearl. The God Chang'e, wife of Houyi, rules this subrealm. Her chief companion is a rabbit who prepares the Elixir of Immortality.

Axes Mundi

The axis mundi of Tian is the Purple Forbidden Enclosure of Heaven itself. Occupying the center of Tian, in the topmost level of Kunlun, it is by definition the highest point imaginable. The Purple Forbidden Enclosure connects to the World at the Forbidden City in Beijing and analogous structures (or their ruins) in previous imperial capitals such as Xi'an and Kaifeng. The Mandate of Heaven demands a link between the Emperor of Heaven and his mortal counterpart. The Purple Forbidden Enclosure also connects to the First Court of the Yama Kings, in the Underworld.

Finally, a God with Wind's Grace (or otherwise able to fly) can reach the Purple Forbidden Enclosure by flying at top speed toward the star Polaris. After an hour of flight, the God reaches the final access point to Heaven. The Jade Emperor can break the connections between the Purple Forbidden Enclosure and the mortal capitals, but not the connection to the Pole Star.

Mount Kunlun has its own axes mundi. Chinese tradition speaks of five sacred mountains within China itself and four sacred mountains "beyond the seas" (meaning beyond the mortal World), one each to the north, south, east and west. These, however, are all simply the four faces of Kunlun. These four faces each connect to a sacred mountain on Earth, just one at a time, temporarily turning the peaks into lesser axes mundi. The western face of Kunlun now connects permanently to the highest peak of the Kunlun range in central Asia — trapped by the Fateful link of the shared name. The eastern face permanently connects to the highest peak of Penglai. The other two faces' connections are still mobile, their terminals in the World set by the Immortal Grandfather of the South Pole.

To qualify as a "sacred mountain," a peak must carry a temple to the Celestial Bureaucracy. Usually, the Immortal Grandfather connects Kunlun to Mao Shan, Tai Shan, Wu-Tang Shan or other traditional sacred peaks in China. As the Chinese Diaspora spreads and grows, however, the shen work to build temples on sacred mountains around the World (no matter who they were sacred to before). Some shen grumble that they'd rather have axes mundi to *cities* around the World, but the pantheon could not change the laws that govern Kunlun's axes mundi without razing their entire Godrealm and rebuilding it from scratch.

As Gods create subrealms within Tian, however, they also forge whatever axes mundi they please. Chang'e, for instance, defines her lunar realm's axis mundi as an event rather than a place: Anywhere that people celebrate her holy day, the full moon of the eighth lunar month, Gods can pass between her subrealm's largest cassia tree and any of the open-air altars raised in her honor. Since Tian includes many more subrealms than can be described here, shen have many options for travel between the World and Overworld, though they probably need another deity's permission.

The shen also face one additional restriction unknown to other pantheons: paperwork. Leaving Heaven by axis mundi without the proper authorization from the Office of Celestial Travel in Tian Shu is a mild offense, punishable by fines of 10 points of Legend. Gods who enter Tian by any of its axis mundi must also report promptly to the same office, or face similar punishment. This is, after all, the Celestial *Bureaucracy*....

Since the Siege — Nibbled to Death by Ducks

Hundun, the Titan who long has been the Celestial Bureaucracy's special foe, does not manifest physically in Tian. Other Titans claimed beachheads, however, and the shen know they received help from Hundun's old front-man Chiyou (see pp. 122-123). A horde of Soku-no-Kumi's creatures erupted from the dark place in the star-river that corresponds to the Coal Sack, and was beaten back with some difficulty. A cave in Kunlun became Crom Cruach's chalk and disgorged a swarm of nemean vermin. Akhetaten's seraphim tried to capture the three-legged sun-crow and kidnap that entire subrealm. Two sacred mountain terra incognitae have been destroyed outright. No single attack has posed a major threat to the Celestial Bureaucracy, but the war-Gods recognize them as mere probes designed to test the pantheon's defenses.

Greater danger may come from the pantheon's own attempts to stay on a war footing. Guan Yu declared a state of emergency when the Titans escaped, but as years pass with no major attack, Gods grumble and return to their normal projects and ways of doing things. Other Gods want to take the offensive and attack the Titans themselves. Some Gods want to gather allies among other pantheons; others remain isolationist. Guan Yu does his best to keep the pantheon united, but he knows that divine factions now organize their own war plans — and those plans must eventually collide. When that happens, Hundun has its opening to throw the pantheon into chaos. Already, overstressed shen accuse each other of being pawns of Hundun, adding to the tension. Guan Yu needs some clear mission for the shen to rally around, so the pantheon can exploit its huge numbers and organizational talents — and the Titans won't give him one.

ANTAGONISTS

The Celestial Bureaucracy encounters many strange creatures of Legend. Some of them work for the Gods themselves. Others serve the Titans. Both sorts are potentially dangerous to unwary Scions.

CHIMERA: QIONGQI (CREATURE ••••)

This creature's name means "thoroughly odd," and it deserves the epithet. This bizarre spawn of Terra has an eagle's wings and a tiger's body, but covered with quills like a hedgehog with a mane of longer quills running down its neck. It is thoroughly malevolent: the qiongqi prefers to kill the virtuous, but it may present slain animals as gifts to wicked and disruptive people. It also hunts people who have long hair (though it readily kills anyone or anything weaker than itself, if it gets the chance). No one knows why it starts at the nose when it eats its victims.

Not only is the qiongqi as strong and lethal a hunter as a tiger, it can fly and stoop like an eagle. Anyone who attacks it by hand gets pierced by its coating of quills. Like a tiger, it has a load and intimidating roar. It cannot speak, but has greater intelligence than any mere beast. Strangest of all, the qiongqi can sense who is in the right of a dispute, or at least who is telling the truth, as a way to pick whom it attacks first. As part of this power, it can detect fellow servants of the Titans. The qiongqi does what it can to help them and to harm the decent folk of mortal society.

Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 3, Stamina 6; Charisma 2, Manipulation 4, Appearance 1; Perception 4, Intelligence 2, Wits 4

Virtues: Ambition 1, Malice 3, Rapacity 3, Zealotry 2

Abilities: Athletics 4, Awareness 4, Brawl 3 (Swoop to Attack +3), Fortitude 4, Integrity 3, Investigation 3, Presence 3, Stealth 4, Survival 3

Supernatural Powers:

Flight: A qiongqi can fly at three times its normal movement rate in combat, or up to 50 miles per hour out of combat.

Quills: Anyone who succeeds at an unarmed attack against the qiongqi suffers one die of Piercing lethal damage from the creature's quills, unless the character has at least 2L soak from armor, or 4L intrinsic soak. (The quills are supernaturally sharp, it's part of the creature's legendary nature.) Also, anyone whom the qiongqi grapples suffers this damage with each of the creature's actions, unless the character has the requisite defense.

Tiger's Roar: The first time a qiongqi roars, people who can hear it may hesitate from fear and animals run away. Each character's next action is delayed by one tick due to this hesitation unless her player succeeds at a (Wits + Integrity) roll. If a character has Courage or Valor, add the higher Virtue rating to the dice pool, without need to channel Willpower through the Virtue.

Virtue Sense: With a successful roll of (Perception + Investigation), a qiongqi can tell if a person believes she tells truth or lies, or if a person or creature has at least one dot in a Dark Virtue.

Join Battle: 9

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 6, Damage 6B, Parry DV —, Speed 6, Piercing

Bite: Accuracy 6, Damage 7L, Parry DV —, Speed 6

Claw: Accuracy 7, Damage 6L, Parry DV 3, Speed 4

Soak: 0A/3L/6B

Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 4 **Willpower:** 6

Legend: 2 **Legend Points:** 4

Trophy: A qiongqi's quills are its trophy. When slain, the qiongqi quickly disappears from its sheer improbability, but leaves behind a number of steel-hard quills equal to its remaining Willpower points. By inserting one of these quills at a special acupuncture point, one can render a person incapable of lying or, using a different point, incapable of telling the truth. This effect lasts for one minute, after which the quill evaporates. While some knowledgeable shen already know the special acupuncture points, a character can deduce them through a roll of (Intelligence + lowest of Medicine or Occult). Mortals cannot resist the qiongqi's quill. Scions and other people of Legend can resist the quill's power by spending one point each of Willpower and Legend.

Other Notes: Servants of the Titans might receive a qiongqi as an ally. As a Birthright, it functions as four-dot Creature.

LESSER IMMORTAL: CHINESE DRAGONS (GUIDE •••• OR •••••)

In addition to Gods, Scions, ghosts and lesser immortals, the Celestial Bureaucracy includes a great many dragons, whom they call Lóng. Unlike the vicious, fire-breathing dragons in the myths of Western barbarians, the Chinese know dragons as intelligent and cultured creatures, though they are sometimes careless or with violent tempers. Chinese dragons also dwell in water, whether rivers, lakes, under the sea or high in the clouds. The greatest dragons are so powerful they are Gods in their own right. Even the least powerful dragon, however, can equal the might of a demigod.

The Chinese describe their dragons by the Nine Resemblances: horns like a stag's, head like a camel's, eyes like a demon's (or a rabbit's), ears like a cow's, neck like a snake's, belly like a clam's, scales like a carp's, the soles of its feet like those of a tiger and claws like an eagle's. They are colored black, blue, green, red or yellow. A dragon has from three to five claws on its feet, representing their age, power and rank in the Celestial Bureaucracy. A dragon's voice has the ringing tones of a gong.

The tatsu found on pp. 234-235 of **Scion: Demigod** can adequately represent a lóng who could become a four-dot Guide. Instead of acid breath, however, the lóng has all the Sky and Water Boons from one to five dots. Some dragons can also take human form.

ADDITIONAL DRAGONS

The lóng themselves exist in many variant breeds and forms. Notable examples include:

Dragon Horse: Fuxi found the eight trigrams of the I Ching on the back of a creature resembling a horse's body with a dragon's head and scales.

Dragon Kings: Ao Chin, Ao Jun, Ao Kuang and Ao Shun live in palace of crystal and pearl at the bottom of the sea. They regulate the oceans, and the shen count them as Gods. The four Dragon Kings feel considerable rivalry with Ryujin, the Amatsukami's dragon king.

Fu-Tsiang-Lung: A dragon who guards precious metal ores and treasures.

P'an Lung: An earth-dragon, unable to fly.

Shien Lung: The imperial dragon, bearing scales of all five colors and five claws on its feet. It directs wind and rain and protects imperial dynasties. Only the Son of Heaven and members of his court can wear the image of the imperial dragon.

Tian Lóng: The celestial dragon that supports the palaces of the gods, when this becomes necessary.

Ti Lung: A celestial water dragon that lives in the clouds during springtime and under the sea in autumn. It guards rivers and streams.

Ying Lóng: The only dragon with wings is millennia old and controlled the weather for Huang Di during his battle with Chiyou.

Yu Lóng: The carp dragon, which has the head and fins of a fish.

LESSER IMMORTAL: THE WHITE SNAKE

The White Snake is one of China's best-known legends. The opera about her has been performed around the world. The legend tells how a white serpent (already a supernatural creature, as shown by its color) practiced austerities to gain further magical powers, including the power to take the form of a beautiful woman. As Madame White, she married a young scholar... and the versions of the story diverge. They range from a version in which she takes her true form and kills him, to the opera in which she is a loyal wife but her husband freaks out when he learns the truth; a Buddhist abbot forestalls any attempt at reconciliation by imprisoning her for centuries beneath an enchanted pagoda.

The White Snake *tried* to be good. This lesser immortal wanted to earn a place in the Celestial Bureaucracy by showing she could be a person, not a supernatural predator. She even invaded Mount Kunlun for a magic herb to save her husband's life. It was all for nothing. She's now free again, however, and mad as hell. The White Snake does not serve the Titans, but she's willing to work with their servitors for the sake of revenge on the Celestial Bureaucracy. It is not *completely* inconceivable that a Scion could ease her anger at the pantheon, but it would be incredibly difficult. In the White Snake's case, Loyalty acts in a manner quite distinct from Duty: She can go to amazing lengths for the sake of friends and lovers, but cares little for social obligations. Her campaign against the Celestial Bureaucracy, indeed, is driven by her high Loyalty.

This lesser immortal possesses formidable powers. She has great proficiency at Taiyi, magic and the Illusion Purview. As a divine spirit untainted by mortality, the White Snake can use axes mundi to enter the Overworld. She is a mastermind rather than a front-line combatant, though. She takes false identities to spy on the pantheon, sabotage their efforts or arrange the deaths of Scions or lesser immortals. In human form, the White Snake appears as a beautiful young Chinese woman dressed in the height of fashion. Drinking wine mixed with realgar, however, sickens her and forces her to resume her true form as a python-sized snake with pure white scales.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 7, Stamina 6; Charisma 6, Manipulation 7, Appearance 5; Perception 6, Intelligence 5, Wits 6

Virtues: Duty 1, Harmony 2, Intellect 4, Loyalty 4

Abilities: Academics 4, Animal Ken 2, Art (Couture and Personal Grooming) 4, Athletics 3, Awareness 5, Brawl 3, Command 3, Empathy 3, Fortitude 4, Integrity 5, Investigation 4, Larceny 3, Marksmanship 2, Medicine 5,

Melee 2, Occult 5, Politics 2, Presence 4, Stealth 3, Survival 1

Birthrights: Follower 5 (Greenie), Relic 2 (Sage's Brush — Illusion, Magic), Relic 2 (Sacred Yarrow Stalks — Mystery, Prophecy)

Supernatural Powers:

Boons: Magic 7, Five-Cycle Augmentation, Yin-Yang Destruction, Five-Cycle Conjunction, Eight Trigram Transformation, Living Hexagram Metamorphosis, Resurrection Anchor, Prophecy 4, Mystery 4, Subtle Knife, Stolen Face, Fool's Gold, Dreamcraft, Fantastic Vistas, Hidden name, Loaned Identity, Animal Communication (Snake), Animal Command (Snake).

Epic Attributes: Epic Dexterity 5 (all Knacks in **Hero**, Divine Balance, Escape Artist), Epic Stamina 4 (Holy Fortitude, Regeneration, Self-Healing, Skin-Shedding), Epic Charisma 5 (all Knacks in **Hero**, Boys Will Be Boys, Crowd Control, Unimpeachable Reference), Epic Manipulation 7 (all Knacks in **Hero** and **Demigod**), Epic Appearance 5 (all Knacks in **Hero** and **Demigod**, A Visage Great and Terrible), Epic Perception 5 (all Knacks in **Hero**, Environmental Awareness, Subliminal Warning), Epic Intelligence 3 (Know-It-All, Language Mastery, Perfect Memory), Epic Wits 6 (all Knacks from **Hero**, Instant Assessment, Monkey in the Middle).

Shapeshifting: At will, the White Snake can resume her animal form. In this form, she retains all her Attributes and Epic Attributes, but the only Boons she can use are her intrinsic Animal Boons. On the other hand, her bite is venomous (use Titanspawn Venom; **Scion: Hero**, p. 182).

Spells: All spells from **Hero** and **Demigod**, Bound Spirit, Legendary Surge, Measured Foe, Meddlesome Fates, Transient Visitation, Tugging Heartstrings (see "The Manifestations of Ichor," p. 80).

Join Battle: 11

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 10, Damage 4B, Parry DV —, Speed 6, Piercing

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 9, Damage 7B, Parry DV 15, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 11, Damage 4B, Parry DV 17, Speed 4

Bite: Accuracy 11, Damage 6L, Parry DV —, Speed 5

Soak: 4A/11L/14B

Health Levels: -0 x 13/Incap

Dodge DV: 20 **Willpower:** 8

Legend: 8 **Legend Points:** 64

Other Notes: The White Snake's two Relics are a calligraphy brush once used by the legendary Taoist master Chang Dao-Ling and a box of yarrow stalks for casting the I Ching divination in its most traditional form. She does not need a Birthright to use her two Animal Boons, as they are implicit in her being a snake-spirit.

The White Snake's Follower is her maidservant Greenie, another supernatural snake that can take the form of a beautiful Chinese woman. Greenie has a Legend of 6 and all the White Serpent's Epic Physical Attributes and Epic Wits, with full Knacks, but has no Boons except for Animal Communication and Animal Command. Her base Attributes are all one less than the White Snake's. Greenie also lacks the White Snake's intellectual Abilities, but has Brawl and Melee 4 — she's a superb martial artist and fencer.

Minion: Demons

Enormous numbers of demons inhabit the realms of Chinese mythology. Most of them have only descriptive titles, such as Jade Zither Demon or Nine-Headed Pheasant Demon. Most demons look humanoid, albeit possibly with unusual numbers of arms or heads. However, they have brightly hued skin, prominent fangs, claws and possibly horns, bone spurs or tails. Their powers are too diverse to list.

Origins of demons are similarly diverse. Many demons started as titanspawn, and quite a few of them serve the Titans still. Others began as gods or lesser immortals of China's ethnic minorities, either forced into the Celestial Bureaucracy's service or still fighting against it. (Most of these turned to the Titans long ago.) Finally, persistent sinners whom all the tortures of Di Yu cannot reform may be transformed into demons so that at least their incorrigibly violent impulses find a proper outlet in the service of Heaven.

The basic, low-power demonic minion has a Legend of 3. To write one up, start with the Experienced Soldier (**Scion: Hero**, p. 283). Add four dots of Epic Physical Attributes (with Knacks) and the one- and two-dot Boons from an All-Purpose Purview. Specialist demons may have a higher Legend or other powers; for instance, a Superior Clerk Demon from Di Yu might have two dots of Epic Intelligence with Knacks such as Perfect Memory and Language Mastery. Demons of greater power can have higher Legend and additional Epic Attributes, Knacks and Boons.

Demons that serve the Titans follow Dark Virtues. Demons that serve the Celestial Bureaucracy have mixed Virtues: typically, Rapacity and Malice combined with Order and Courage. They lack the finer moral sensibilities for Duty and Valor, and so are restricted to mere obedience and battle-fury — and their grosser, brutal appetites frequently overwhelm them if they lack firm oversight by the shen.

Undead: Qing-Shi

The "corpse-spectre" (also called ch'ing-shih, ki-anghshi, etc.) is the Chinese vampire. These undead can look human; some may wear ornate robes or simple funeral shrouds. This is merely a disguise, though.

When a qing-shi uses its Titan-derived powers, it becomes a green-skinned, faintly luminous, corpse-horror with a mouthful of fangs and long white hairs on its body. Qing-shi range from nearly mindless killers who never think to look human to subtle and sophisticated predators who move easily through the most refined mortal society.

To the basic undead template described on p. 257 of **Scion: Demigod**, the qing-shi adds a deadly, freezing breath. This has the same lethal effect as the touch of the yuki-onna (**Scion: Demigod**, pp. 289-290), but acts at a two-yard range. To strike a target with its breath, the qing-shi's player must succeed with a (Dexterity + Marksmanship) attack roll. Individual qing-shi may develop additional powers, such as flight or turning into a wolf or a ball of glowing vapor. Qing-shi often tear victims limb from limb and gorge on the blood and flesh; many corpse-spectres also feel a mad lust and rape before they kill.

Qing-shi cannot cross running water or a line of iron filings, red peas or rice. Salt dissolves a qing-shi's flesh, to the point that a handful of salt thrown on a qing-shi inflicts a level of aggravated damage.

TITAN: HUNDUN – CHAOS

AKA: Adharma, the Elder Chaos, the Void Heart of Infinity

Over the millennia, the Celestial Bureaucracy has faced and fought many Titans. Their greatest battle came when Gonggong broke the sky: The Gods fought the Black Dragon of Soku-no-Kumi, the floods of the Drowned Road, the monstrous beasts of Terra and the fires of Muspelheim all at once — and won. The Chinese Gods do not fear these Titans. But who gave Gonggong, formerly a minor God, the power to rend Pangu's handiwork and open the way to these Titans' forces? Only Hundun, whom the shen call the first Titan, the blind lord of the chaos from whence all things came, and who seeks to draw all things back into its formless abyss.

The Gods themselves can explain Hundun only through metaphor. Some Gods describe Hundun as a faceless giant, blind, deaf and mute, fumbling at the walls of reality in search of a crack with which to tear them apart. Others call Hundun a black, storm-tossed ocean without a shore. Such poetic fancies fail to capture the truth of Hundun, whose defining feature is its lack of defining features. There is one way to see Hundun directly, though: Ask a God of Chaos to become The Void. That mind-shattering view into everything and nothing is a window on Hundun.

To the extent that Hundun wants anything, it wants to unmake Pangu's creation. The sages of Heaven believe Hundun even wants to unmake the other Titans, though it may help them enter the shaped Worlds as a way to weaken the Gods. After all, most Titans define themselves quite narrowly: Akhetaten is Light, Ehekatoyaatl is Air and so on, with minimal admixture of other elements and principles. Hundun is all of these, and none. The only powers that seem beyond the reach of Hundun and its servants are Prophecy for asserting an inevitable progression of time and causality; Justice for asserting a moral and social order; and Guardian for asserting a trustworthy connection between oneself and other creatures.

Other pantheons find Titans physically encroaching on their Godrealms, absorbing their substance while giants and monsters emerge from the Titan's body to attack them. The Celestial Bureaucracy face only minor threats of this sort. It doesn't matter. Hundun doesn't operate that way. The Elder Chaos gibbers in the Gods' dreams and whispers in their hearts when they argue. Hundun is the mad impulse, the word you wish you hadn't said, the desire you barely dare to acknowledge. Without words, the Titan speaks to the angry, the obsessive and everyone who hates the World for being itself instead of an extension of their will. Hundun promises Gods and Scions that they can make the World a mirror that reflects only themselves.

That's a big temptation for a God. Wielding such power, it can be hard to accept that you still need to get along with other Gods. But... what if you had truly *ultimate* power? No more rules to follow, no more fear of consequences, no more crap from other Gods. Just submit to Hundun, become its vessel and break the World.

Favored Purviews: Chaos, Darkness, Illusion, Psychopomp, Water. Note that the Illusion Purview appears in **Scion: Ragnarök**. If you do not have that book, ignore this Purview. Also, while Hundun's proxies must favor at least one of these Purviews, they can favor other Purviews as well.

Banned Purviews: Guardian, Justice, Prophecy

THE CHAOTIC TEMPLATE

The titanspawn created by Hundun itself usually manifest surrounded by clouds, rains of blood, sand or other substances, or swarms of insects. This cloud has a radius in yards equal to the creature's Legend. Any solid-seeming core is merely a denser clot of this substance; only the creature's eyes are truly solid. As such, Hundun's creatures can be difficult to damage. No attack on the creature's body, however powerful, can deal more than a single level of damage after soak. If the creature normally would have taken enough damage to kill it outright, it instead dissolves into the surrounding cloud, to coalesce again (down one level of damage) five ticks later.

Attacks on the creature's eyes deal full damage. The eyes, however, possess a higher DV than the creature itself: Do not halve the (Dexterity + Athletics + Legend) total used to calculate Dodge DV before adding any bonus from Epic Dexterity. Chaotic creatures have no Parry DV because they are not solid enough to deflect an attack.

Their less-than-solid nature enables chaotic creatures to pass through tiny openings, such as under a door or through a screen or air vent: A barrier must be air-tight to keep out a chaotic creature. These creatures are immune to any Chaos Boon wielded by any creature whose Legend does not exceed its own.

On the other hand, a chaotic creature's Legend is considered two less than its true value against Guardian or Justice Boons. What's more, such Boons briefly force a chaotic creature into solidity. When a chaotic creature becomes the target of a Guardian or Justice Boon, the creature's player resists the dice roll associated with that Boon using a (Willpower + Integrity + Legend) roll for the creature (and remember the reduction in effective Legend). If the attacker's player wins the contest, the chaotic creature becomes solid for five ticks per net success of the attacker. The creature can no longer pass through small openings, and any attack upon it inflicts the normal quantity of damage.

Finally, the actions of chaotic creatures are immune to Prophecy unless the creature becomes Fatebound in some way. No one can foretell the actions of Hundun's emanations or predict when the Titan may empower a God as its avatar by proxy.

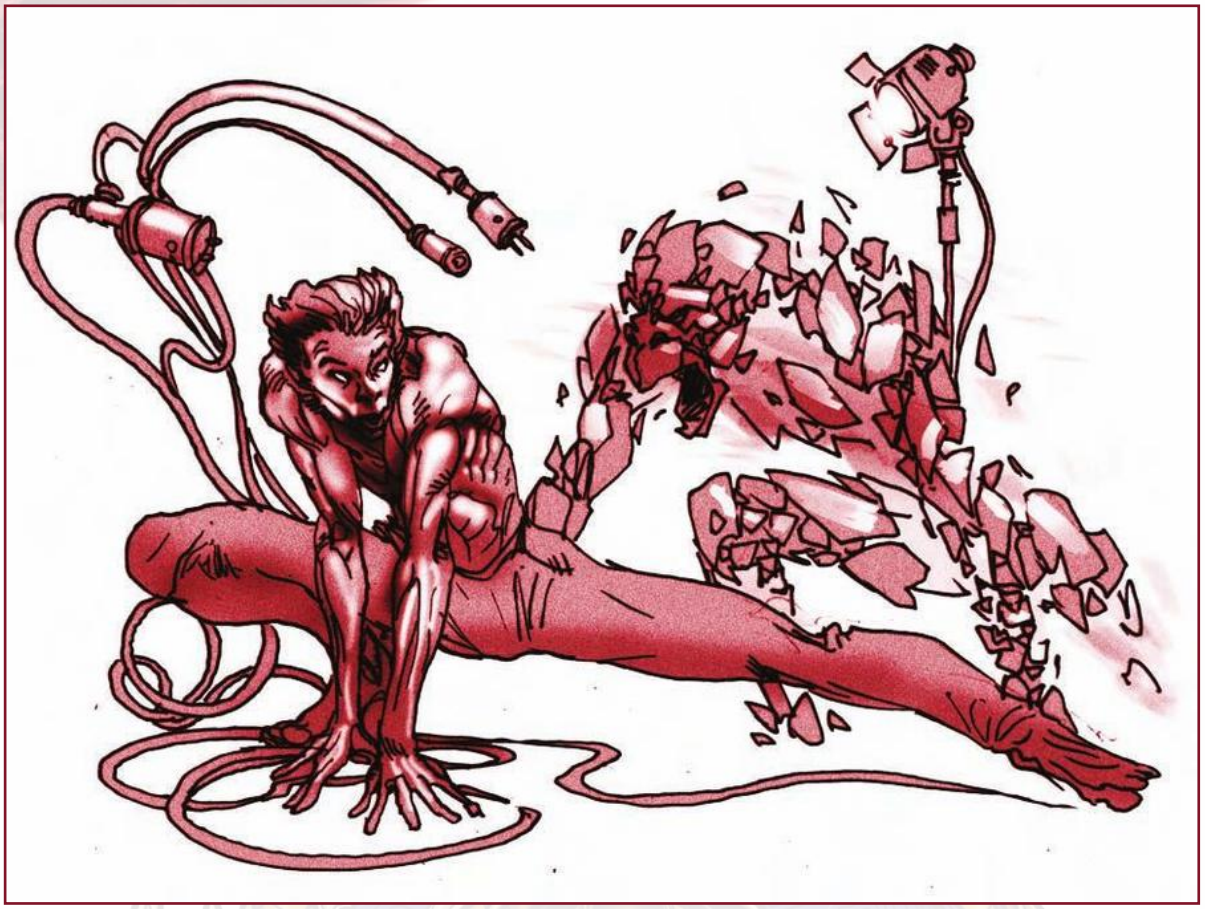
PROMINENT FEATURES

Strictly speaking, Hundun has no features. It has no size, no shape, no distinction between "here" and "there." It is light *and* dark, wet *and* dry, roused to furious motion *and* utterly static and unchanging.

Perceiving such a paradox of Being and Nothingness crushes mortal minds in an instant. Gods find it difficult to comprehend as well. If any creature finds itself within Hundun, it becomes subject to the madness of chaos: The creature's player rolls (Willpower + Integrity + Legend) for every scene. The player needs successes equal to a randomly chosen Virtue, or the character suffers the Virtue Extremity condition of that Virtue and loses two Willpower points. When the character loses all his Willpower points, he loses his sense of self and dissolves into the Void Heart of Infinity, gone forever (though Hundun may send out a black calamity or other chaotic creature in his outward form).

Visitors to Hundun tend to project their own thoughts onto the Elder Chaos, though. Hundun mirrors their thoughts, building fantasy-realms based on the visitor's desires, fears and obsessions — including a Scion's Virtues. These imaginary worlds make no more sense than dreams usually do, and act to prod a Scion's Virtues. For instance, Tommy Li might find himself on a mad movie set with a film crew of monkeys made of broken glass, being attacked by mortal friends and relatives armed with fish, who insist that he sing show tunes – but he doesn't have a mouth. A player needs at least 8 successes on the (Willpower + Integrity + Legend) roll to resist creating such a dreamworld... not that this makes any difference whether or not a Scion suffers a Virtue Extremity.

Escaping from Hundun involves forcing stable form and definition on its chaotic non-substance. This means deliberately shaping a dream world and holding it stable. Doing this calls for the same roll as resisting Virtue Extremity or absorption in a dream world shaped by Hundun, again at difficulty 8. By sheer strength of will, the character imagines a portal or passage to someplace else and forces Hundun to accept this reality. Then the character spends a point of Legend to traverse this passage — but he should expect the Elder Chaos to send a celestial dog or at least a few black calamities along with him, just for the chance to project a bit of its reality-deranging power into the shaped Worlds.



PASSAGES

To find Hundun, journey into the furthest reaches of Mythspace until you are completely lost and no forms remain to guide your travel. Or, have a God become The Void and jump through him into the Elder Chaos.

Of the other Titans, Ehekatoyaatl, Soku-no-Kumi and the Drowned Road have the most affinity for Hundun. When the whispers and dreams of the Drowned Road become meaningless babble, where the storms of Ehekatoyaatl knot in such tight confusion that there's no telling lightning from hail, when you travel so long in the utter darkness of Soku-no-Kumi that you can no longer tell if you are awake or sleepwalking — then, you are near Hundun. Any Titan-realm, however, might develop a passage to Hundun in a place that the Greater Titan itself has forgotten about. For instance, the Titan avatar Aten never thinks about the darkness beneath his palace of mirrors, the one place in Akhetaten where his boundless radiance does not penetrate.

CHIYOU

Hundun never emanates a true avatar: The Titan of Chaos does not create defined, unique individuals. Instead, Hundun infuses its power into willing Gods. Such proxies wield the power of avatars, but they lack an intimate, Fateful connection to Hundun. Killing one of these proxies does not alter the nature of Hundun itself, or the World. A captured proxy cannot be used to bind Hundun by magic. Indeed, the Celestial Bureaucracy believes that Hundun cannot be bound: To bind something, you must define it. By definition, the Elder Chaos cannot be defined.

Of the various Gods to whom Hundun gave power, Gonggong caused the most damage but the arch-rebel Chiyou became the most persistent. The war between Chiyou and Huang Di raged across China and involved numerous Gods on both sides. In the end, the Yellow Emperor executed Chiyou. The arch-rebel came back, though, and caused trouble on several occasions.

Long ago, Chiyou introduced metal weapons and armor to China. At first, the shen thought these were a useful gift for humanity, since they helped civilized folk to defeat wild beasts and barbarians. In his pride, however, Chiyou sought to conquer both Heaven and Earth. His weapons made him mighty; he sought to become Almighty, and rule by force instead of by right conduct and right understanding.

The arch-rebel still tries to make himself supreme by destroying the harmony of Worlds, Gods and mortals. Chiyou leads uprisings of damned souls in Di Yu, and barbarian invasions in the mortal World. He causes natural disasters and civil wars. Though a mighty warrior, his power to rouse the rabble may be just as dangerous, and he is cunning enough to hide his power in mortal or immortal guises, much like the Gods themselves. Worst of all, Chiyou readily works with avatars, spawn and minions of other Titans. If anyone can persuade two Titans to coordinate assaults on the Celestial Bureaucracy, it's Chiyou. The shen

fear this possibility almost as much as Hundun inspiring another civil war between the Gods themselves.

In his traditional form (it is arguable whether such a disciple of the Elder Chaos still has a *true* form), Chiyou appears as a tall, powerfully-built man with the hooves and head of an ox, four eyes and six arms. He wears bronze armor and a fearsome helmet adorned with an aureole of blades. He may take any other form he pleases, but reverts to this ox-headed form when he decides the time is right to declare his power and terrify the Gods.

Chiyou has a base dice pool of 22 for all actions. He favors Physical Attributes.

Virtues: Ambition 4, Malice 3, Rapacity 3, Zealotry 4

Supernatural Powers:

Avatars: The General, The Void

Boons: Every one- to eight-dot Boon from every Purview except Guardian, Justice and Prophecy, which are forbidden to Chiyou. The arch-rebel also has all Boons from the Chaos, War and Taiyi Purviews.

Epic Attributes: Epic Physical Attributes at the 10-dot level (with all appropriate Knacks). All other Epic Attributes at the eight-dot level (with all appropriate Knacks).

Forge Birthright: Chiyou crafts powerful Birthright weapons and armor in mere hours, though he needs at least a small quantity of legendary raw materials such as demon blood, a dragon pearl or lunar cassia-bark. For a single point of Legend, he can craft a Relic rated up to four dots. With a few days, 10 points of Legend and extraordinary legendary material (such as the body of a lesser God or one of the peaches of immortality), Chiyou can forge five-dot Relics. Chiyou gives out such Relics as bribes, but they also carry curses that cause murder, chaos, madness and (one way or another) harm to Gods or the World.

Resurrection: As a Titan avatar, Chiyou does not actually have Ultimate Stamina. Since he has complete mastery of Taiyi, however, he achieves much the same effect.

Shapeshifting: Chiyou can take any more-or-less humanoid form, including forms with different numbers of arms or heads, at no Legend cost. He can also manifest with a reduced Legend as if he had three dots in the Avatar Birthright, though this reduces his base dice pool (it stays at twice his Legend), while his Epic Physical Attributes cannot exceed his (Legend -1) and his Epic Mental and Social Attributes cannot exceed his (Legend -2).

Join Battle: 22

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 22, Damage 12L, Parry DV -, Speed 6

Unarmed, heavy: Accuracy 21, Damage 15L, Parry DV 56, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 23, Damage 12L, Parry DV 58, Speed 4

Sword of Murder: Accuracy 26, Damage 18L, Parry DV 58, Speed 4

Soak: 10A/52L/57B

Health Levels: -0 x 52/Incap

Dodge DV: 57 **Willpower:** 9

Legend: 11 **Legend Points:** 121

Other Notes: Though of classical Chinese styling, Chiyou's sword is identical to Tyrfing (**Scion: Hero**, pp. 167-168), including the curse that once drawn, it must be used to kill. Anyone who draws the sword (except Chiyou himself) temporarily has three dots of Malice that drive him to kill someone before he sheaths the blade again. It's a good example of the sort of Relic Chiyou would give away. Chiyou does not bother wearing real armor: The armor he seems to wear is actually formed of ichor, just like his body.

REVISIONIST HISTORY

The official story of Chiyou's rebellion might not be completely truthful. The San Miao people of southern China claim Chiyou as their divine ancestor and patron. Quite possibly, Chiyou was never a member of the Celestial Bureaucracy at all, but a God of a rival pantheon, making the war between Huang Di and Chiyou an imperial conquest that paralleled the conquest of the San Miao by the Han ethnic group that now dominates China. The Celestial Bureaucracy does not like to admit that China's other ethnic groups ever had Gods of their own; and the shen accept that every administration, mortal or divine, tweaks its official histories to justify its rule.

No matter how the war began, though, Chiyou sought help from the Elder Chaos and became the Titan's proxy. Whatever motives once drove this God, he now seeks to cast all Worlds and realms into chaos and destruction.

BLACK CALAMITY

The black calamity, or hoh sheng, is one of Hundun's lesser emissaries into shaped reality. Chinese tradition holds that the hoh sheng appears when the Emperor is unrighteous. To prevent further manifestation, the Emperor must confess his faults in the Temple of Heaven, reduce taxes and order a purge of corrupt officials. Actually, the black calamity doesn't specifically need a bad Emperor to enter the World: Any misrule, in which leaders neglect their Duty with a resulting collapse of social Harmony can open the way for a hoh sheng.

A hoh sheng manifests in a rain of black peas or sand, and leaves surfaces spattered with rotted blood. The core of the creature looks like a human or comparably sized dog, cat or other animal, though legend speaks of black calamities appearing in the form of snakes that rolled about like hoops. Whatever its form, the creature is flat black except for its

golden eyes. A black calamity inflicts wounds with a mere touch; these wounds are painless, but slow to heal (aggravated damage). A black calamity prefers to enter homes at night to kill one or two sleepers while leaving other people unharmed. They seem to have some sense of which victim's death can most disrupt the family, preferring beloved children and respected elders.

Fortunately for humanity, the black calamity suffers a terrible weakness to salt. A single handful of salt cast at the creature inflicts lethal, Piercing damage equal to a Light Unarmed attack. A quart or more acts as a Heavy Unarmed attack that deals Piercing lethal damage, and such attacks bypass the black calamity's chaotic template. A slain black calamity vanishes with a crack like a gunshot, leaving only smears of stale blood and a single golden eye.

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4; Charisma 4, Manipulation 1, Appearance 3; Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 4

Virtues: Ambition 1, Malice 4, Rapacity 2, Zealotry 2

Abilities: Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Brawl 4, Empathy 2, Fortitude 4, Integrity 1, Investigation 1, Larceny 3, Presence 3, Stealth 4

Supernatural Powers:

Boons: Hornet's Nest, Sky's Grace

Chaotic Nature: Black calamities possess the chaotic template (see "The Chaotic Template" sidebar, p. 121).

Epic Attributes: Epic Dexterity 1 (Lightning Sprinter), Epic Stamina 2 (Self-Healing, Solipsistic Well-Being), Epic Appearance 1 (Lasting Impression; negative)

Join Battle: 7

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 8, Damage 2A, Parry DV -, Speed 6

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 7, Damage 5A, Parry DV -, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 9, Damage 2A, Parry DV -, Speed 4

Soak: 2A/4/6B

Health Levels: -0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 7 (eyes 12) **Willpower:** 6

Legend: 3 **Legend Points:** 9

Trophy: A black calamity's trophy is its eye. The eye protects its bearer from Chaos Boons wielded by any creature whose Legend does not exceed the bearer's own. The eye grants this protection three times (once for every dot of Legend the black calamity possessed), then dissolves into putrid blood and black sand.

Celestial Dog

This mighty spawn of Hundun manifests as a lean and menacing, vaguely canine but ox-sized shape of dense yellowish vapor with pitch-black eyes. A thin cloud of faint, yellow-green radiance surrounds it for a 45-yard radius, and at night the celestial dog is visible for miles. The cloud around the titanspawn smells faintly of rot, while the creature itself reeks of decay. Just coming near a celestial dog exposes mortals and Gods alike to sickness of both mind and body. Celestial dogs exist to spread madness and destruction; they learn from their surroundings how and where they can cause the most damage.

Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 8, Stamina 8; Charisma 6, Manipulation 1, Appearance 6; Perception 5, Intelligence 2, Wits 5

Virtues: Ambition 2, Malice 4, Rapacity 4, Zealotry 4

Abilities: Athletics 4, Awareness 5, Brawl 4, Craft 5, Integrity 3, Investigation 4, Occult 5, Presence 3, Science 5, Survival 2

Supernatural Powers:

Boons: All Chaos Boons from one to seven dots; all negative Health Boons from one to seven dots. These are innate powers for the celestial dog.

Chaotic Nature: Celestial dogs carry the chaotic template (see the sidebar on p. 121).

Dissolving Touch: A celestial dog's attacks deal aggravated damage.

Entropic Aura: A celestial dog's mere presence dissolves matter, mind and soul. When a character enters the celestial dog's radiant aura, her player rolls (lowest Virtue + Integrity) at difficulty 3. Failure means the character loses half her Stamina and Epic Stamina (with appropriate alteration to health levels), half her Willpower points and half her Legend points. A character who exhausts her Willpower points in the aura goes mad as if affected by Crawling Chaos (Chaos • • • • •).

Epic Attributes: Epic Dexterity 3 (Cat's Grace, Lightning Sprinter, Monkey Climber), Epic Stamina 5 (Damage Conversion, Divine Damage Conversion, Regeneration, Self-Healing, Solipsistic Well-Being), Epic Charisma 1 (Pied Piper), Epic Appearance 3 (Center of Attention, Inescapable Vision, Lasting Impression), Epic Perception 4 (Predatory Focus, Spatial Attunement, Supernal Hunter, Telescopic Senses), Epic Intelligence 1 (Telepathy)

Join Battle: 10

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 12, Damage 6A, Parry DV -, Speed 6

Bite: Accuracy 11, Damage 9A, Parry DV -, Speed 5

Paw: Accuracy 13, Damage 6A, Parry DV 11, Speed 4

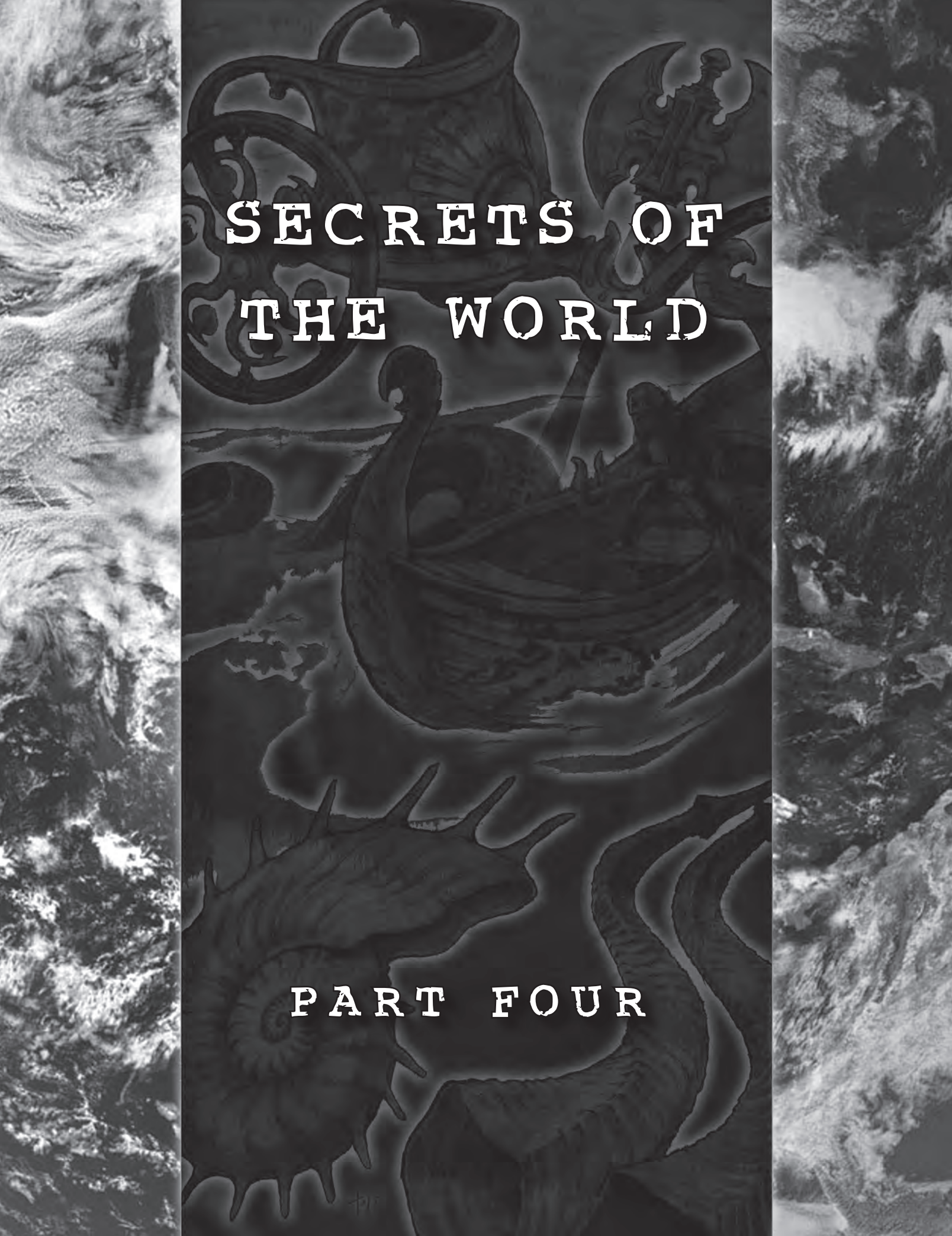
Soak: 5A/15L/19B

Health Levels: -0 x 17/Incap

Dodge DV: 14 (eyes 24) **Willpower:** 8

Legend: 8 **Legend Points:** 64

Trophy: A celestial dog's trophy is the howl it emits when it dies. That howl lodges in the mind of one of its killers (whoever has the fewest Willpower points at the time, or randomly in case of a tie). Its presence strips the character of another Willpower point that she cannot regain until she uses the howl. Any time thereafter, the character can release the howl from her own throat, with the same effect as Instant Riot (Chaos • • • • • • •). The howl then vanishes from her mind.


SECRETS OF
THE WORLD
PART FOUR

"Well," Claire Jefferson said, balancing the statuette in one hand and as she pointed a Browning 9 millimeter at the policeman in front of her, "this is something of a pickle, isn't it?"

Sergeant Ryan Smith was not amused. His own .38 service revolver had a perfect bead on the thief's pretty, dreadlock-ringed face. Smith's cap had been lost during the chase that had preceded the standoff, revealing a sweat-matted mop of receding black hair.

"Put the gun and the statue down, slowly," he said, struggling to keep his voice calm. He wasn't afraid of this punk girl and her pea-shooter, but he was worried that his temper would get him in trouble again. The blood of Ares ran through his veins, and it was all he could do to quiet its demands to smear this kid's brain matter across the well-polished marble of the museum floor. "Whatever you think you're gonna get from the sale," he said, "it ain't worth your life."

"And your beat cop salary's hardly worth yours, Jack." Claire kept her own gun steady. Who did this jackass think he was? Even if this statue was only what it appeared to be, Claire's degree in art history told her this icon was worth more than his precinct's entire operating budget. Not that she would ever be so crass as to steal it. But Erzulie didn't send her daughter on a petty thieving mission – a lot more than money was riding on this heist.

"This is your last warning," Smith began, but even as the words formed on his lips, Claire slid to the side, the world blurring into streaks and smears as she raced away down the hall.

She didn't have time for a yelp of surprise as Smith impossibly appeared in front of her, and even less time to try and stop herself. She slammed headlong into the policeman, whose body had become a brick wall. She flew across the room, managing to curl around the statue as she fell, protecting it with her body as she landed on the unforgiving marble floor. Her gun went flying across the room.

Smith towered over her. "Game ov–" he started to say, when Claire's legs swung out from where she lay sprawled and kicked his own out from beneath him. The two met halfway to the ground, exchanging blows and kicks faster than the security cameras could record. Somehow Smith's gun ended up in Claire's grip, pointed at his own temple, while his hands fastened around her slender throat.

"Back… where we started… eh?" she struggled to cough out.

"I didn't think you'd believe me," said Smith, "but since you're obviously… special… you should know that this statue's stolen property. The God of War wants it returned to his arsenal, for the fight against the Titans. I assume you're familiar with that?"

"Too damn familiar," she said as his grip relaxed slightly. "But your pappy's feeding you a line of horseshit. The statue's property of Erzulie, and she needs it to restore the beauty of the city of New Orleans."

"You got any proof?"

"A note on a handkerchief, signed by the Goddess herself. You?"

"A note from Ares, written in blood on the back of a shield."

The two stared at each other for a good long time.

"So where do we go from here?" she asked.

"I think," Smith said, acutely aware of the barrel digging into his temple, "we need a third opinion."

* * *

Victor Praedico turned the statue over and over in his wizened, age-spotted hands. Then he placed it next to the handkerchief and the shield, three objects set off from a clutter of a thousand others in the claustrophobic bric-a-brac of his tiny curiosity shop in the West Village.

"Convincing," he said at last, "but in the end, forgeries. All three."

"What?" the thief and the cop cried in unison.

"That's impossible," said Claire. "I know my mother's handwriting…"

"The shield was the real deal…" began Smith.

Praedico raised a hand to silence both of them, lowering his dark sunglasses to reveal two hollowed-out eye sockets. "I know what I see," he said. "These notes and the statue, they all bear the mark of Miclántecuhtli. This is Aztec magic at work." He replaced the glasses as a lost tourist wandered in, lowering his voice to a whisper.

"I'm afraid you've both been had," the old man said, with a chuckle that dripped with schadenfreude. "The Atzlánti lord of the Underworld obviously had some plan for you."

"Well, I think it's time we made some plans for him." Smith drew himself up to his full height. "I don't appreciate being tricked."

"Neither do I," Claire said. "What do you say? Feel like letting bygones be bygones, at least until we find out what's going on here?"

Smith adjusted his cap and nodded. "Let's do it. I'll pay you back for the bruises later."

"Bruises? Hell, you made me ruin a $200 pair of shoes…."

Their voices faded into the din of 83rd street traffic, leaving Victor Praedico alone with the wandering tourist. Dressed in a Hawaiian shirt, with a camera slung around his neck like a lei, the Japanese man peered through enormous square glasses at the shopkeeper. Then he reached into the garish money-belt at his waist and pulled out a gold coin, then another, then another, until he had produced an impossible pile on Praedico's desk.

"My lord is too generous," Praedico bowed, his crooked spine creaking.

"You have a reputation for truth-telling." The tourist's voice, despite its low volume, sounded like a series of thunderclaps. "Your lies cost money."

The shopkeeper scooped the pile of coins into a sack beneath the counter. "They will, of course, eventually discover the deception."

The tourist smiled, his teeth looking like small jagged lightning bolts. "Perhaps. True enough, Miclántecuhtli was not the one who forged those letters. But surely he is up to something. It is his nature. In their determination to find that something, those children will track him all the way to Mictlán, and what they see there will be of immeasurable value to me."

He turned the digital camera over in his hands, watched the small videoscreen reveal the two Scions hailing a cab.

"If I may be so bold, Lord Raijin," Praedico interrupted his viewing, "may I ask why the need for such deception? Why not send one of your own noble sons or daughters to the Aztec Underworld?"

"You are indeed too bold," the tourist's eyes flashed, "but then, soothsayer, I value boldness. Were I to send one of my own kin, Miclántecuhtli would know immediately. This way, if… no, when… he catches the spies, he will look first to the Loa and the Dodekatheon."

Praedico remained silent. He was privy to many hidden mysteries, yet the schemes of the Gods were beyond even his comprehension….

LEGENDARY POLITICS

Aristotle called man the "political animal." Most folks spend a large portion of their lives living, conversing, fighting or just sharing the same space with other people. As long family car trips attest, close proximity and constant interactions can cause friction.

But what's the alternative? Living in a cave? The Gods have that option. They can hole up in the bounded yet infinite space of their cozy little Overworld nutshells and never speak to another entity again. But as reflections of humankind, the Gods too are political animals. Not only can they not resist meddling in the affairs of humanity, but neither can they keep out of the business of their divine siblings, both within and outside of their pantheons. These interactions can be genial, competitive, amorous, hostile or all of the above, sometimes during the same week. When entire pantheons conspire, parley or war with one another, the consequences shake the World.

There can be any number of reasons for cross-pantheon interaction. In the beginning, the Gods had to unify to overthrow their Titan forbearers, and even now that they have drifted into separate pantheons they remain bound together in ever-shifting alliances and rivalries. Part of what makes this political landscape so muddled is that relations between the Gods are bound up with relations between humans in the World. A clash between two pantheons could spark a war between the cultures that worship them. A love affair between two Gods of separate pantheons could result in a sharing of culture and learning between their followers. Both could even happen simultaneously, for the Gods are nothing if not paradoxical.

But the Gods are (at times, anyway) greater than just manifestations of cultural nationalism. Gods operate under their own personal motives and agendas as well as the metaphysical ties that bind, or ensure conflict, between Gods of different pantheons. It's enough to give the brainiest political analyst a migraine, but here are some ways of understanding divine politics.

BIRDS OF A FEATHER

Gods of the same ilk and All-Purpose Purview will run into one another sooner or later. Occasionally, these run-ins can make for intense camaraderie. Stories recount the legendary team-up between War Gods Ogoun and Hachiman to rescue the Princess of the East from the clutches of a griffin. Loki and Set have been seen cruising down the streets of Las Vegas at midnight in a souped-up, open-top pink Cadillac causing all manner of mayhem.

More often, though, familiarity breeds contempt. One story claims the Chernobyl disaster was the grand finale to a knock-down, drag out brawl between Ares and the Slavic war God Svantavit. Gods of other Purviews are a little subtler, and arrange all manner of contests and games to determine supremacy. For example, although dead mortals tend to end up in the afterlife in which they always believed, "snatching" for your own netherworld a soul destined for another realm does happen (although extremely poor form). Similarly, "beauty contests" like the one the Dodekatheon posed before Paris happen between pantheons as well.

Metaphysically, Gods of the same Purview couldn't escape such run-ins, good or ill, if they tried. When Susanno-O made Amaterasu hide her face, causing the sun to vanish, Apollo fell into a deep depression and locked himself in a cave. Like it or not, the Gods are bound by stronger ties than pantheon, and so are their children. Two Scions of Gods of the same Purview, sooner or later, are destined to become close friends, bitter enemies or both.

WARS IN THE HEAVENS

The war against the Titans is probably the only thing that keeps the different pantheons away from each other's throats at least *part* of the time. Humans make war on one another with hideous frequency, and a rivalry between pantheons may either cause or be caused by a war in the World.

As their followers match swords, bullets and bombs, so too do the Gods clash and grapple. Warfare not only carries drastic consequences that many Gods wish to avoid, but it is simply not in the nature of many deities to engage in open combat. For the Amatsukami, for example, all but the most surgical and calculated of wars upsets more than restores the balance of the cosmos. Aphrodite's humiliating wound at the hands of the hero Diomedes in the Trojan War was proof enough that some Gods are far better at making love than war. A few louts like Ares and Svantavit aside, most Gods work out their rivalries subtly. Through agents and pawns (which inevitably include their Scions), the Gods fight their proxy wars within and between pantheons.

THE ROLE OF SCIONS

Although face-to-face clashes happen, it is far more common for the Gods to work out their alliances and rivalries through pawns, particularly their Scions. This does not mean the Gods in question will feel any need to explain their strategy to their children. More likely, they will send them off on missions on only a "need to know" basis, promising boons for tasks completed.

These missions can involve thefts from Scions of rival Gods, reconnaissance both in the World and the Overworld, courier services or even stranger objectives. They will frequently be opposed in these missions by Scions acting on orders from rival pantheons.

Add the fact that many Bands contain Scions of multiple pantheons, and things get really interesting. A Scion may find her loyalties torn between her divine parent and her comrades over matters of pantheon politics. Whatever choice she makes will carry consequences. Refusing a divine summons could lead result in the withholding of favors or even direct punishment. But betraying a teammate leads to broken friendships (and sometimes, broken bones).

As such, it behooves a Scion to try to stay abreast of the politics of their parents. Knowledge is power, and truly crafty Scions, particularly those at the demigod stage, may even be able manipulate the rivalries and alliances of the different pantheons to their own advantage.

The workings of the Gods are mysterious and complex, but nevertheless, over the millennia, some general patterns and stereotypes have formed around and between pantheons.

Pesedjet: Law, order and the common good must be maintained. The Aesir and the Aztlanti, in their own way, understand this, as do the Amatsukami (although they're slow about doing their part). The Loa are wildcards, annoying at best and dangerously disruptive at worst. The Pesedjet consider the Dodekatheon to be their chief rivals, both metaphysically (the individual unchained is the greatest danger to the collective) and cultural-historically: despite the fact that Alexander's Macedonian Greeks actually helped *spread* the religion of the Pharaohs, the Pesedjet have never quite gotten over losing their place as the objects of adulation of mankind's most powerful and advanced civilization.

As one of the oldest of the pantheons, the Pesedjet can't help but treat Gods in other pantheons like children, which seldom endears them to those deities. But then, children never appreciate the sacrifices of their elders, do they?

Dodekatheon: With the exception of the Pesedjet, the Dodekatheon get along fairly well with the other pantheons. At least, that's what they'll say if you ask them. Who *wouldn't* appreciate the company of passionate, good-looking and interesting folk like them? Their goals and those of the Aesir are often compatible, and indeed many long-standing ties of friendship unite the Norse and Greek Gods. The Dodekatheon, if they are ever forced to admit it, don't really "get" the Atzlanti, the Amatsukami or the Loa, but at least those Voodoo Gods know how to have a good party.

Amatsukami: *Izanagi and Izanami* created Japan as the very first land, so it is only fitting that the Amatsukami carry themselves with a stiff-necked pride. They don't boast and preen like the Gods of the Dodekatheon, but any deity dealing with a Japanese God knows that, beneath the smiles and bows, she is being secretly mocked and disdained. That said, the Amatsukami don't *dislike* the other pantheons as a rule; they just place them in their proper slots in the hierarchy (which is, naturally, beneath themselves). The Pesedjet rank higher than most in their esteem, mainly because of their work ethic and good table manners. The Aesir and Dodekatheon, by contrast, are little more than barbarians. The Atzlanti and the Loa place somewhere in-between: they have an appreciation for the interconnectedness of the cosmos, but you cannot fix a delicate paper fan with a bloody mallet.

Atzlanti: None of the other pantheons understand the way of the cosmos, and the Atzlanti have given up trying to explain their ways to others. They don't need the approval. The Loa come the closest to understanding, and as a result, the Atzlanti tolerate them, even to the point of cordiality. The others are arrogant, ignorant and not worth their time. Other pantheons' Scions can be useful tools, so long as they are kept in the dark.

Aesir: The Aesir have a very simple way of determining who their friends are: when Ragnarok comes, who will stand shoulder to shoulder with them? Not that they need the help, of course, but it's a sign of character. The Dodekatheon have the fire in their belly for it, if not the discipline. The Amatsukami have warrior's hearts, but can they be trusted, in their divinations and prattle about "balance," to take the right side? The Atzlanti talk a good game, but are they brave enough to shed the blood anyone who isn't conveniently bound and gagged on their altars? The Loa – well, looks are deceiving. When the time comes, the Aesir have the feeling they want the Gods of Voodoo on their side.

Loa: The Loa are remarkable in that they maintain amicable relations with nearly all of the pantheons. They are not always treated with respect, but take it in stride. Let the other Gods strut and lecture about how the universe "really works." The Loa smile and remember the earliest days of mankind, when hunter-gatherers prayed to them for salvation while running from predators across the savanna. With age comes wisdom, good humor and tolerance. Which is not to say that their tolerance is limitless. Some of the more perceptive Gods of other pantheons have seen enough hints and glimmers or what the Loa could be like if pushed too far that they have begun to quietly re-assess the mettle of these "directionless children."

FEATS OF STRENGTH

EXPANDED STRENGTH TABLE

A Scion at the pinnacle of human strength and ability rolls 10 dice (five each for Strength and Athletics), with a potential of 20 successes, which would confer the ability to lift 4,500 lbs. That's more than two tons, and represents the greatest extremes to which an extraordinary person might go in moments of utter heroism.

But Scions are beyond extraordinary. Increasing levels of Epic Strength add increasing automatic successes to a Scion's attempts to lift, press or smash heavy objects. Recall that every one of these successes past 20 adds another 500 lbs of lifting capacity, and *in addition* the Scion gains whatever weight bonuses come from a particular level of Epic Strength. So for example, a Demigod with 5 dots of Epic Strength and 10 dots in (Strength + Athletics) would have the potential to roll 20 successes (lift 4,500 lbs), which then get an 11 success boost (11 x 500lbs each = 5,500 lbs), *plus* an additional 50,000 lbs to base lifting capacity, resulting in a grand total of 60,000 lbs or 30 tons!

So what can you do with all that Epic Might? The following table can act as a guide.

EXPANDED THROWING RULES

Cúchulainn depended on his holy javelin Gáe Bulg in countless battles, Gilgamesh threw the thigh of the giant Bull of Heaven at the vengeful Ishtar, and Hercules tossed his false friend Lichas into the sea for attempting to poison him. A mighty throwing arm seems prerequisite for an Epic champion, yet the original **Scion** trilogy did not offer much detail on the game mechanics for such actions.

When it's time for your hero to start making objects (or other characters) fly, first check your (Strength + Athletics) against the Feats of Strength chart on p. 181 of **Scion: Hero** to see just how much she's capable of lifting. You can only throw objects up to half the weight of your maximum lift. Note that you can still pick up an object and simply drop it on an opponent, but you'll need Epic Strength to do truly heroic hurling.

Once you determine how much you can throw, make sure the item does not have a pre-established range, as many ranged weapons do (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 203). Assuming it doesn't, get the base range based on your lift limit:

- Items up to 10% of your lifting limit have a Range of 10 yards.

STRENGTH + ATHLETICS	LIFT/ PRESS (LBS.)	SAMPLE FEAT
20	4,500 (about 2 tons)	Knock Semis over with a well-placed shove
20 + Epic 1	5,500	Lift most cars
20 + Epic 2	6,500 (about 3 tons)	Pick up an SUV or pickup truck
20 + Epic 3	8,500 (about 4 tons)	Lift an adult elephant or a full truck
20 + Epic 4	58,000	Lift a bus
20 + Epic 5	60,000 (30 tons)	Rip off and lift a section of a big-city subway
20 + Epic 6	262,500 (about 130 tons)	Pick up a blue whale and spin it around in the water
20 + Epic 7	About 635 tons	Lift an empty oceangoing freighter out of the water.
20 + Epic 8	About 6,260 tons	Lift an entire freight train or a loaded iron boat.
20 + Epic 9	About 62,500 tons	Uproot or hold up the Brooklyn Bridge.
20 + Epic 10	About 625,000 tons	Hold the Empire State Building in one hand and the Sears Tower in the other.

• Items up to 25% of your lifting limit have a Range of 5 yards.

• Items up to 50% of your lifting limit have a Range of 3 yards.

• Items up to your lifting limit have a Range of 1 yard.

Then consider the following modifiers to Range, multiplied in order:

• +50% if the object is particularly aerodynamic (knives, baseballs, boomerangs)

• -50% if object is particularly non-aerodynamic (giant paper Chinese dragons)

• x2 for each dot Epic Strength

• x2 for Hurl to the Horizon (**Scion: Hero**, pp. 126-127)

If an object is particularly bulky, ungainly, or otherwise difficult to throw, then the Storyteller may apply a -1 to -3 penalty to the dice pool of (Dexterity + Thrown). Epic Dexterity still adds automatic successes.

Unless the Storyteller decides otherwise for particular objects, throwing is a Speed 6 Weapon attack.

IMPROVISED WEAPONS

Possessing the Spear of Destiny doesn't do you much good if it's hanging in your armory and a fire giant jumps you in the kitchen. Sometimes a hero must make do with grabbing whatever is in reach, from pruning shears to a hockey stick to a coffee pot. In the right hands, anything from office equipment to a car door can become, if not a deadly weapon, something effective enough to buy you time to arm yourself better.

Rather than attempting to list every possible item a character could conceivably heft, toss or brandish, this quick-and-dirty system is designed to help a Storyteller quickly sort out damage in a Jackie-Chan style fight where anything and everything could become an implement of destruction.

Step One: Give any improvised weapon the following basic stats.

Acc +0, Damage +1, Defense +0, Speed 5

Note that the damage should be considered bashing if the improvised weapon is more or less blunt, and lethal if it is sufficiently sharp (a jagged piece of metal, a pointy javelin) or toxic (a breached acid battery, a radioactive control rod).

Step Two: Add or subtract as per the following modifiers. A single object may have more than one modifier.

• **First Use:** The first time that a character uses a particular improvised weapon, add a –1 Accuracy modifier. Subsequent uses do not suffer from this restriction as the character gets used to handling the object as a weapon.

• **Long:** The item is at least five feet long (canoes, telephone poles), allowing you to strike from a distance (+2 to Parry DV).

• **Large:** You're swinging or hurling something so big, like a highway-side billboard, that your opponent really can't do much evade it (+2 to Accuracy).

• **Massive**: Not quite the same thing as a large object (although an object could certainly be both), a massive object carries greater inertia and therefore deals greater damage. For objects from 500 – 2000 lbs, add +1 die of damage. For objects weighing 2000 – 4500 lbs, add a second die. For extremely massive improvised weapons (tractor-trailers, cruise-liners, buildings) that require Epic Strength to lift, add the number of damage die equivalent to the level of Epic Strength required to lift the item (see chart on p. 130). This is in addition to the +2 dice already gained for the 4500 lbs or more that the object weighs.

Example: Josh Mizuzaka, Scion of Hachiman, tosses a Tokyo Metro subway car at a savage oni. This feat requires an Epic Strength of 5, so 5 bonus dice are added to the damage roll, plus 2 for the bus being 4,500 lbs or heavier. Seven extra damage dice help ensure the subway car hits the oni for quite a wallop, demonstrating once again the benefits of public transportation.

• **Fragile:** The item is made of a delicate material like glass, balsa wood or cheap tin. The item will break after one use. If the item was long, large or massive, the Storyteller may allow it to be used in a diminished form (with diminished bonuses) for one or more additional turns.

• **Soft:** Even heroes have a hard time dealing damage with a pillow or stuffed animal. Any item with this modifier receives a -4 damage dice penalty. This means that, in most cases, only threshold successes and/or Epic Strength will result in damage being dealt.

• **Awkward:** If the Storyteller judges that an improvised item is particularly ungainly (a poorly-balanced U-Haul trailer, an asymmetrical modern art sculpture), floppy (a giant inflatable statue advertising a used car sale) or otherwise just plain difficult to manage, then the item is considered to have a Speed 6 attack, with a Defense -2 penalty to your parry DV.

SPEARS OF DESTINY, CHARIOTS OF FIRE

It's a dangerous World out there for the sons and daughters of the Gods. **Scion: Hero** (pp. 201-205) gave you a good basic list of weapons, armor and vehicles that Scions and their enemies might employ. But when a titanspawn is breathing fire at your back, sometimes the basics don't cut it. Here are some additional tools of offense, defense and transport to add to the arsenals of your players, and perhaps their foes as well.

It would take an entire book to list all of the many weapons known to humanity, so we've listed some general categories as well as some particularly interesting examples. We've also listed some relic weapons and vehicles, available to any Scion with the wit to find them and the will to use them. Remember to apply the penalties for stolen relics (**Scion: Hero**, pp. 162-163), unless the character in question undertakes some quest or rite the Storyteller deems appropriate to gain rightful possession of it.

MELEE WEAPONS

Weapon	Accuracy	Damage	Defense	Speed	Tags
Brass knuckles	+1	+2B	+1	4	-
Garrote wire	+0	+2L	+0	3	-
Flexible weapons	+1	+6L/B	+2	5	-
Iklwa	+1	+4L	-1	4	-
Weighted-end weapons	+1	+4L/B	+1	4	-

Brass knuckles: This covers a variety of "fist-load" weapons like the Japanese yawara and tekko, Greco-Roman cesti and other blunt or sharp objects concealed within one's grip to make a punch pack more power.

Garrote wire: This Roman invention, made famous by the French Foreign Legion, is a tightly wound piece of wire used to strangle someone to death, often employed as an assassination device due to its silent operation.

Flexible weapons: This refers to blunt or edged weapons that are swung on a chain or flexible rope, using centrifugal force to add power to the blow. Examples include the Viking-derived medieval French flail (or morningstar) and the Japanese nunchaku and shoge. The shoge's chain in particular is long enough that the weapon can double as a grappling hook.

Iklwa: When Shaka introduced this stabbing spear, it revolutionized South African warfare and helped the Zulu army conquer all its neighbors. Made of wood with a long iron point, it can be used for quick, repeated close-range attacks (as opposed to the more traditional assegai, which is thrown like a javelin).

Weighted-end weapons: From the South American bola to the Japanese manrikigusari ("strength of a thousand men"), these easily-concealable weapons consist of two small weighted ends along a flexible cord. They can be used as close-range instruments of blunt attack, or as thrown weapons to ensnare a foe and louse up her maneuverability.

RANGED WEAPONS

Weapon	Accuracy	Damage	Range	Clip	Speed	Tags
Boomerang	+0	+1B	10	-	6	-
Discus (razor)	+0	+2L	30	-	6	P
Pepper-Spray	+1	+1B	5	30	-	-
Shuriken	-1	+2L	10	-	5	P
Taser	-1	+3B	20	1 – 2	6	P

Boomerang: A curved wooden or plastic throwing stick used to great effect by warriors from around the world including Australia, Africa and the Indian subcontinent. It can deliver incapacitating blows to the head, neck or legs. When thrown properly, a miss simply returns the weapon to the thrower's hand.

Discus: An ancient Greek piece of sporting equipment that can be deadly in the right hands. The stats in the table refer to a discus that whose edges have trimmed to razor-sharpness.

Pepper spray: A small, easily-concealable device that delivers a fixed number of emissions of a skin and eye irritating compound, usually oleoresin capsicum.

Shuriken: Small sculpted metal weapons designed for throwing, they include not only the popularized star-shaped pieces but also small lancets or even coins. Contrary to Western lore, shuriken are seldom deadly but rather used for distraction or the infliction of disabling pain.

Taser: The Taser is a small hand-held electronic device capable of delivering an incapacitating (but usually not fatal) charge of electricity. It does this by firing two small darts tethered to the device by conductive wires that bury themselves with barbs into the target's clothing or skin. The charge is sufficient to ignore up to 3 levels of body armor (hence its Piercing quality).

ARMOR AND SHIELDS

Armor	Soak	Mobility Penalty	Fatigue	Tags
Hazmat/NBC Suit	+0L/+1B	-3	2	-
UHMWPE Armor	+7L/+10B	-2	2	B
Yoroi	+2L/+4B	-1	1	-

Hazmat suit: While it offers scant protection against physical attacks, a properly sealed hazmat suit grants immunity from nuclear, biological and chemical damage (the smallest breach, however, negates this protection). They also offer some protection from temperature extremes. Assume two hours of oxygen is available from the attached oxygen tanks (which are highly flammable if breached).

Composite (UHMWPE) Armor: Developed by the US Army when Kevlar proved insufficient protection from improvised explosive devices, this extremely expensive synthetic weave feels like wax paper and is composed of tightly packed, high molecular weight polyethylene. Advertised as ten times stronger than steel, these composite fibers disperse most kinetic force applied against them.

Yoroi: Samurai armor. Lightweight, flexible, designed for maneuverability as well as protection, samurai armor uses a "fish scale" model where bamboo and leather plating cover the body except in the most vulnerable areas, where metal is employed. Armored samurai could make full use of ju jitsu, laido and swordsmanship while suffering only minimal movement penalties. In addition, many breeches in the armor can be repaired by mundane sewing tools, as opposed to having to visit an armor-smith.

VEHICLES

Vehicle	Armor	Mass	Maneuverability	Health Levels
ATV	4	1	+3	10
Bicycle	1	0	+0	3
Canoe	1	1	-1	2
Hang-glider	1	0	-1	2
Helicopter	5	5	+2	20
Jet (commercial)	15	15	-3	60
Jet (private)	10	10	-1	25
Plane (single-engine)	5	5	+1	20
Racing Car	5	2	+1	15
Segway PT	1	1	+2	4
Sloop	5	4	-1	20
Speedboat	6	2	+1	15

ATV: A small, maneuverable ride-on vehicle for recreation or specialized tasks. Use these stats for jet skis and snowmobiles as well.

Bicycle: Human-powered locomotion, fragile but easy to fix and able to go where cars can't.

Canoe: Although modern Americans use them for sport and leisure, many island cultures have used canoes and kayaks effectively for long-range exploration or combat.

Hang-glider: A one-person glider composed from fabric stretched across a large aluminum or composite wing, the harnessed pilot beneath controls his movement by shifting body weight. Modern hang-gliders can coast for hours and gain significant altitude by riding thermal currents.

Helicopter: Use these statistics for any civilian model of helicopter. Helicopters employ a pair of rotor blades that rotate around masts to revolve air, providing lift and propulsion. Helicopters have VTOL (vertical takeoff and landing capabilities), requiring no runways, and can hover in place for extended periods. Their maneuverability is far superior to fixed-wing aircraft, but they are not as fast and cannot reach as high an altitude as jets due to the need for high air density.

Jet (commercial): 747s and their ilk, these enormous planes (despite their sophisticated computer auto-navigation equipment) usually require one or two trained pilots to coordinate takeoff, landing and unforeseen developments in the air. Long runways are required for take-off and landing. Cabin environments (although not cargo areas) are pressurized and climate controlled, with a breach resulting in a debilitating lack of oxygen for all passengers and a vortex that sucks out anything not nailed down. Would-be hijackers should note that the movements of such planes are carefully tracked in Western nations. A handful of commercial jets have been experimentally equipped with largely-untested anti-missile countermeasures.

Jet (private): Larger and faster than the hobbyist's plane, corporations and governments use these to ferry people and small cargo loads in comfort and style. Their cabins, like those of commercial jets, are pressurized.

Plane (single-engine): Refers to all small single-engine or propeller driven planes. They are not pressurized and therefore restricted as to how high they can fly without incapacitating those inside.

Racing car: Specialized automobiles like Formula One or NASCAR vehicles built to reach higher speeds and offer more protection for their drivers than their commercially available cousins. Racing cars are expensive and require specialized maintenance, not to mention specialized training in order to control them at high speeds.

Segway PT: This two-wheeled, energy-efficient ride-on device is mainly a tool of hobbyists, although some American police forces have begun economizing by using them. Sophisticated gyroscopes keep the ungainly vehicle balanced, and despite the presence of handlebars, an operator need only incline her body in one way or another to change direction.

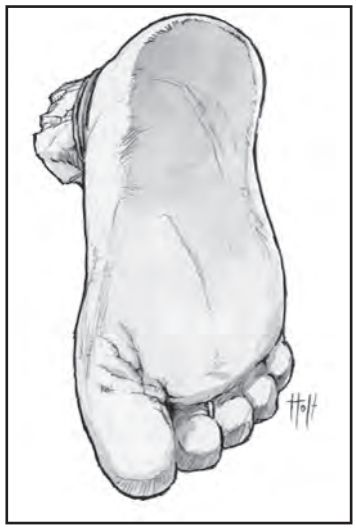
Sloop: Use these statistics for any generic sailing vessel that requires a crew of no more than five.

Speedboat: Use these statistics for any small, motor-operated watercraft.

RELIC WEAPONS, ARMOR AND VEHICLES

TEZCATLIPOCA'S FOOT

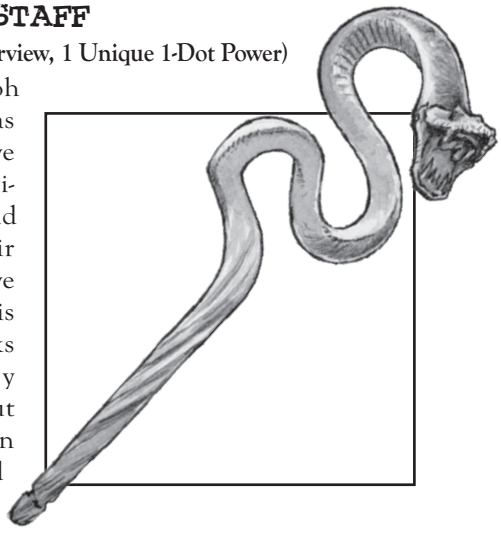
Relic •••• (1 Purview, 1 Unique 3-Dot Power)



One Aztec myth describes the World as a creation of Quetzalcoatl and his twin brother Tezcatlipoca, who wasn't terribly careful and lost his foot in the process. This relic is a large stone foot that is remarkably light and flat, useable as a shield if one grasps the ankle and presents the foot-pad outward. The flat part of the shield causes any physical objects that collide against it to immediately break up into their component molecules. The foot cannot be used as a ram to dissolve opposing forces as a weapon, nor will it accidentally sever the limb of someone who casually touches it. Only attacks directed against it trigger the effect. The foot also grants access to the Earth Purview.

SERPENT STAFF

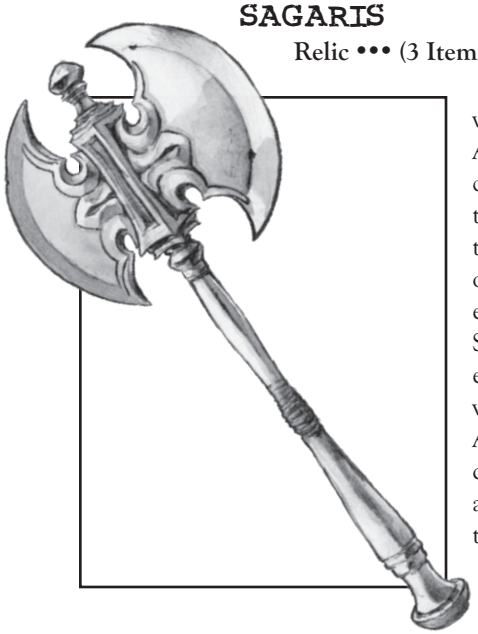
Relic •• (1 Purview, 1 Unique 1-Dot Power)



The Pharaoh Ramses was said to have employed magicians who could transform their staves into live serpents. This staff looks completely ordinary, but when thrown to the ground (and with the expenditure of 1 Legend point by its wielder) it transforms into a cobra (**Scion: Hero**, p. 330). Should the cobra be slain, it reverts back to a staff, which shatters and becomes useless. Untransformed, the staff grants its wielder access to the Animal (Snake) Purview.

SAGARIS

Relic ••• (3 Item Enhancements)



The favored weapon of the Amazons, this double-edged battle-axe was lost to the ages, survived only by the single-edged version that Scythian designers stole and reverse-engineered. A true sagaris confers a +3 damage bonus over the basic skeggox template (**Scion: Hero**, p. 202). It is enchanted specifically to be wielded by females; in the hands of a male, it not only loses its damage bonus but also adds a –2 Accuracy penalty.

BENKEI'S ARMOR

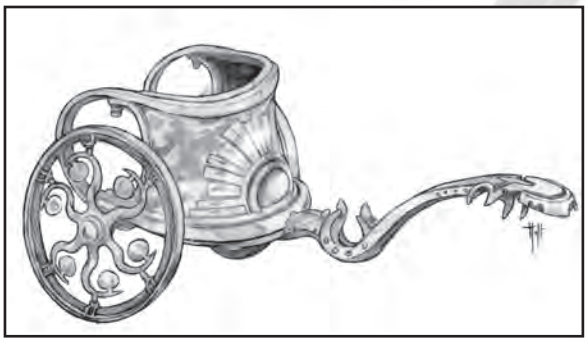
Relic ••••• (1 Purview, 4-Dot Item Enhancement)

The demigod warrior-monk Benkei guarded the Gojo Bridge in Kyoto, collecting 999 swords from the 999 warriors he disarmed while they attempted to pass. On his 1000th duel he was defeated by the warlord Minamoto no Yoshitsune, to whom he swore allegiance. Benkei went on to win the crucial battle of Dannoura, cementing his lord's power, only to be betrayed by Yoshitsune's elder brother Yoritomo. Benkei and his patron fled the evil Yoritomo's reign, becoming hotly pursued outlaws. Benkei fought off Yoritomo's army on another bridge to buy Yoshitsune the time to commit ritual suicide. Benkei took a seemingly endless number of arrow hits and finally died, his corpse still standing guardian on the bridge. Benkei's armor was rescued by his divine father, a minor temple god, who preserved it for use by future heroes.

The armor is a seemingly normal Yoroi suit (see p. 133) with a +4 Soak bonus that grants access to the Guardian Purview.

SWEET CHARIOT

Relic ••••• (2 Purviews, 1 Unique 2-Dot Power, 1 Unique 1-Dot Power)



Shango, Loa God of Justice, could not bear the plight of his proud people bound in chains of slavery in the Americas. Although he had pledged long ago to withdraw from the World, at times he would secretly visit the plantations of the South in his golden chariot, flanked by the spirits of Masai and Yoruba warriors, and take particularly brave, noble or troubled slaves body and soul to Ville au Camp. Perhaps Shango was merely taking advantage of the Judeo-Christian Elijah myth, or perhaps the song "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" secretly refers to the Shango's vehicle, but the fact remains that it has earned a place in the stories and songs of millions as a symbol of hope and deliverance.

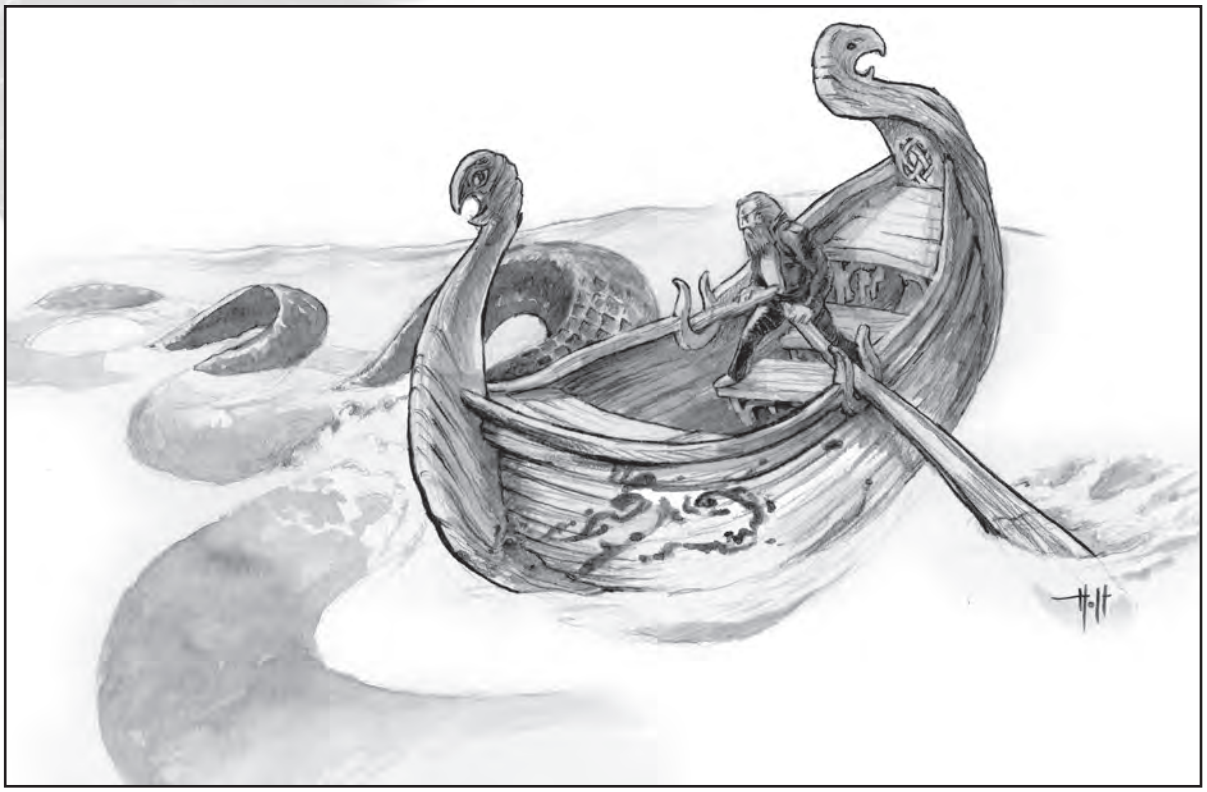
With the official end of slavery in the US, Shango moved on to other goals and tactics, leaving his chariot behind where it could best be found by a new generation of heroes, to aid new victims of oppression.

The Sweet Chariot has the power of flight and grants access to the Justice and Sky and Cheval Purviews. It can hold up to five people, although in times of need, *somehow*, there always seems to be room for "just one more."

HYMIR'S BOAT

Relic ••••• (1 Purview, 2 Unique 2-Dot Powers)

The giant Hymir thought himself a fine fisherman until Thor paid him a visit one day in the guise of a young boy who begged to come along on a fishing trip. Hymir condescendingly agreed, provided the boy brought his own bait. Thor proceeded to rip the head off Hymir's finest ox, tie it to the end of his pole and row the baffled giant out to the edge of the World to go fishing for the Midgard Serpent. Terrified at the sight of Thor reeling in the enormous snake, Hymir cut the line, allowing the beast to escape. Thor in his rage hurled the giant into the sea and left Hymir's boat to drift.



The boat, already the handiwork of a giant, was now splattered with blood from the Midgard Serpent. Whoever finds this humble-looking, oar-driven vessel will find it capable of amazing feats. On sea it will never sink, no matter how much water it might take on. Furthermore, it can traverse hundreds of nautical miles in mere seconds, so long as the rower keeps a clear picture in her mind of where she wants to go. Possession of the boat also grants access to the Water Purview.

There is a cost, of course, to these powers: the Midgard Serpent *always* knows where Hymir's boat is. For now, its humiliation at Thor's hands makes it wary of approaching the vessel again, but should it become aware of the boat's new ownership it might well decide to wreak its vengeance on the new owners in lieu of the God. Finally, Hymir is out there, somewhere beneath the waves. Should he return and give the boat a command, it will always obey him instead of any other owner besides Thor himself.

THE ORDER OF THE DIVINE GLORY

"We understand that this is a confusing time for you. The world you know is coming undone, and a frightening new one beckons. We can help you understand your new abilities, your role in the divine plan. No, no more of that silly story about Gods. There is only one God, after all, and He works in mysterious ways, with signs and wonders and misdirection. Oh yes. Every Saint and Prophet started out just like you, right now. Take my hand and everything will become clear."

About three thousand years ago, a small group began a movement to exalt the worship of one God above all others, and over the centuries "thou shalt have no other Gods before me" became "thou shalt have no other Gods, period." Evangelism has by today converted about half the world's population to some form of monotheistic faith, at least officially. Hidden within this diverse group is a secret organization called the Order of the Divine Glory whose mission is to rewrite the legends of the Old Gods into the story of the One God.

HISTORY

Sometime in the 1300s BC, the Pharaoh Amenhotep, later known as Akhenaten, raised the Egyptian empire to new heights, building massive temples that awed the world. Akhenaten was a Scion tempted over to the side of the Titan of the same name, and was rewarded handsomely by its sole avatar Aten. The Pharaoh, not content to be a mere pawn, embarked upon the audacious strategy of using Fatebinding to his own advantage – he composed a great hymn to the Aten, declaring not only that the Titan he worshipped was the supreme God, but the *only* God. In this way, he sought to make "Ra" all at once supreme and defined, inextricably tied to his rule in a way that excluded

all other possibilities. He hoped to wrap a lasso around Ra, binding its fate to him and his empire alone.

Whether the Pharaoh would have succeeded or not will never be known, as an uprising of unknown origin shattered his city, left its temples to be torn down by the Pharaoh's successors. But Akhenaten's secret plan of Fatebinding survived his death, however, through a Band of Hebrew slaves who fled Egyptian captivity. Their forbearers had already entered into a Fatebound covenant with a Sumerian storm God, to their mutual benefit. It took several centuries until the Hebrew King Hezekiah decoded Akhenaten's methods and began the Deuteronomic movement, expunging all belief in all of Israel's old Gods except the Sumerian storm God.

Other pantheons, from the Gods of Babylon to the Dodekatheon, moved their servants in to crush the upstart monotheists. The Hebrew temples burned, and they thought that was the end of that. But from Judaism, Christianity arose first to pester, then eventually take over the Roman throne. Having been crushed twice by jealous Gods, however, the inheritors of the Pharaoh Akhenaten's legacy, in hiding among the worshippers of the One God, grew more cautious.

In 731 AD, the Venerable Bede convened the first meeting of the Order of the Divine Glory, propagating its message through a supposed letter from Pope Gregory I. In it, he outlined a plan to convert pagans by incorporating their traditions into Christianity instead of attempting to eliminate them. "To the end that, whilst some gratifications are outwardly permitted them," Bede wrote, "they may the more easily consent to the inward consolations of the grace of God." Wherever Christianity traveled, the Order followed, seeking out the Scions of the old Gods and convincing them that, in fact, they were servants of One God. Scions were the stepping stones to the Gods themselves, after all. Proceeding in this manner, agents of the Order managed to slowly climb the rungs of Fatebinding, changing ancient stories subtly to avoid the punishments visited on Akhenaten.

The Order's agents are myriad, and they are not only tied to Christianity. Indeed, Bede and his original council depended upon contacts in the Jewish and Zoroastrian faiths, and later on among the ranks of Mohammed's followers. Wherever missionaries enjoined the people to worship just one deity and to deny the existence of all others, the Order was there to seek out the Scions of the indigenous Gods and co-opt them. Thus did the Scions of the West Germanic Goddess Eostre become administering seraphim of Christ's ascent on Easter, and the Gods of Yoruba become the saints of Santeria. As the stories changed, so too did the Gods and their children change to become servants of the One God, and by extension, servants of His followers.

The mainstream leaders of the Abrahamic faiths, of course, have no idea as to the Order's true purpose. If they are even aware of its existence at all, they consider the Order to be a particularly eccentric band of missionaries. The Order keeps its agendas held tightly to its vest, unbeknownst even to their own rank-and-file. Those agendas are nothing less than the eventual Fatebinding of all the Gods into One, a God subservient to the Order's wishes.

TACTICS

The key to the Order's power is that they have not only realized Fatebinding exists, but that the process can work both ways. To this end, they do everything they can to move their agents into positions where they will become as Fatebound as possible to Scions. The Order then does its best to tug on their end of the link. To this end, the Order employs a three-step approach.

- **Reconnaissance:** The Order employs skilled ethnographers, anthropologists and theologians to carefully research new cultures and the Gods they worship. While some of these fieldworkers harbor a missionary agenda, these days they are usually liberal-minded academics with a passion for preserving the "true culture" of these indigenous peoples. Order's agents promise them not only free travel and equipment but an interested, respectful audience for their work. These academics have no inkling that the Order will eventually use this material as intelligence for better insinuating their own narratives, reworking the native into their tale of the One God. It is the rare graduate student who questions the signer of her grant checks!

- **Recruitment:** Should reconnaissance turn up any Scions, the Order immediately moves its agents in to become close to them. If the prospects look promising, this close relationship moves to one of active recruitment. Agents use the tactics of any cult, offering young and confused individuals the promise of acceptance, prestige, sex, drugs – whatever it takes to win them over. Not all of the Order's recruiters are loon-faced kool-aid purveyors. Many of them are educated professionals who lead successful lives, folks from whom the recruit may suspect little harm until he starts getting urged to drop his old friends and steer clear of any psychologists.

- **Remastering:** The Order's long-term, big picture goals involve co-opting "pagan" religious symbols, deities and stories into their particular brand of monotheism. To this end, they produce pamphlets, teaching materials and other storytelling weapons in the propaganda war, as well as insinuating their teachers into village schools all over the developing world.

This is the slow road for the Order. Getting agents Fatebound to a Scion is the on-ramp to a pantheon-bound expressway. For some Scions, the offer of money and attractive groupies are all it takes to take up the mantle of sainthood. Others are genuinely convinced by the Order's offer of purpose and clarity, and take to their new roles with genuine fervor. Still others

find themselves Fatebound unwittingly – even active opponents of the Order are still part of the Order's story. A Scion who thinks she's the hero of her pantheon's story may actually be playing a bigger role in the grand tale of the Order's triumph.

Still, an ally is better than an enemy. The Order will make every effort to recruit Scions if they can, including using their staff of highly trained psychologists with theological degrees. Through drugs, sleep deprivation and other brainwashing techniques, the Order has many ways of helping "deluded" Scions see that they are children of the One God, not some headdress wearing, spear-chucking monster.

It should be made clear that most members of the Order believe that they are doing the work of God (or Allah, or whatever name they give "The One True God"), rescuing and recruiting those He has blessed and banishing the false notions that tempt them from the path. Most of the Order's propagandists are simply fervent believers in their own religion, concerned with spreading their particular faith. Mention "Fatebinding" to one of the Order's theologians and he will likely dismiss it with a puzzled stare. Even those Order operatives who come face-to-face with the amazing abilities of Scions generally reconcile them as miracles consistent with the teachings of their particular faith.

Only the innermost circles of the Order speak of placing chains around the legs of the Old Gods, rewriting their stories until, one by one, they merge into one deity sworn to the Council's own purposes. Ironically, if these agendas were ever discovered, the Order's own elders would be burned as heretics for acknowledging the existence of other Gods at all – their God would demand no less. Thus has the Order been Fatebound to its own vision.

The Order, despite its networks of influence, is in the end a mortal organization, and a small, hidden one at that. What challenge can they possibly pose to the children of Gods?

The Inner Circle is not stupid. They know that they will lose in a direct confrontation with Scions, so they do whatever they can to avoid such open conflict. When violence is deemed unavoidable, the Order will contract out to the more fanatical branches of the One God's followers. If a stubborn local shaman is causing mischief, it might be time for a fundamentalist militia to shoot up his village. A spiritual healer who clings to the old ways might find her clinic on the bombing list of a radical anti-abortion group. There are more than enough people willing to kill in the name of religion that the Order doesn't need to sully its hands.

MIRACLES

In addition to the mundane methods detailed above, the Inner Circle does have a couple special tricks up its sleeve. After all, they have had many centuries to unravel and develop Akhenaten's techniques. These two "miracles" function like Knacks, but Knacks that can be taught to mortals, albeit not easily – an Order member must undergo months if not years of mental and spiritual training before accomplishing one miracle.

WATER TO WINE

The One God reveals Himself to those who know where and how to look. With the expenditure of a Willpower point, this ability allows the wielder to perform one small miraculous act like making a dead flower bloom, turning water into wine or making a small plant burn without being consumed by flame. This act should not have any utility in combat; its purpose is to awe and instill a sense of wonder, usually for the purposes of making converts.

DIVINE INTERVENTION

No mortal may command the One God nor even understand His ways, only pray for His mercy and the occasional dram of well-timed grace. This ability, successfully employed, gives the agent an extra bit of luck. Upon the expenditure of a Willpower point and a successful (Stamina + Integrity) roll, the agent can mitigate – but not entirely nullify – an immediate threat to her physical well-being. Examples include clinging to a ledge when by all rights she should have fallen, turning a direct hit which into a glancing blow and finding that the bible in their pocket took the bullet meant for their heart. Each success will reduce one Health Level lost in a single attack, down to a minimum of one.

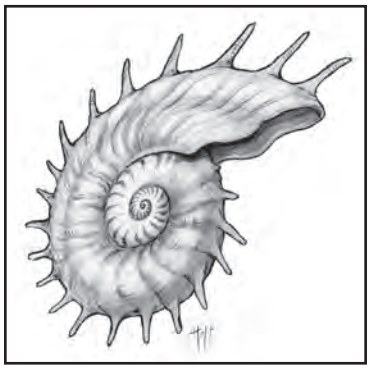
ORDER ARTIFACTS

On those rare occasions when violence is unavoidable, the Inner Circle does possess a small, carefully-guarded handful of mystical artifacts left over from the God-form of Ra, passed down and preserved to the present day. The Pharaoh himself may have been banished, but a few of the gifts granted to him by the deity he sought to enslave are still circulating and still puissant.

AMON'S HORNS

Only five of these pairs of aurochs' horns remain extant today. When invoked, this artifact can erase the memory of anyone, mortal or Scion, within a line of sight distance of the user. There does not seem to be a limit to the number of people the horns can affect, or the number of times it can be used. The wielder must consciously determine the amount of time she wishes her victims to lose track of (the last day, the last year, the last ten years). The Order mainly employs the horns as a way of covering its tracks or as a last-ditch method in important "conversions." The horn is a poor combat weapon, as the ritual for using it takes many minutes to enact. The precise workings of the Horns are left to the Storyteller to determine.

AMMONITE SHELL



Appearing to be little more than intricate seashells, these discarded carapaces of extinct cephalopods can, when activated, form an invisible shield around the wielder that provides +5L/8B soak in addition to whatever personal armor the user might be wearing. Should the shield be breached, the ammonite shell shatters and cannot be used again.

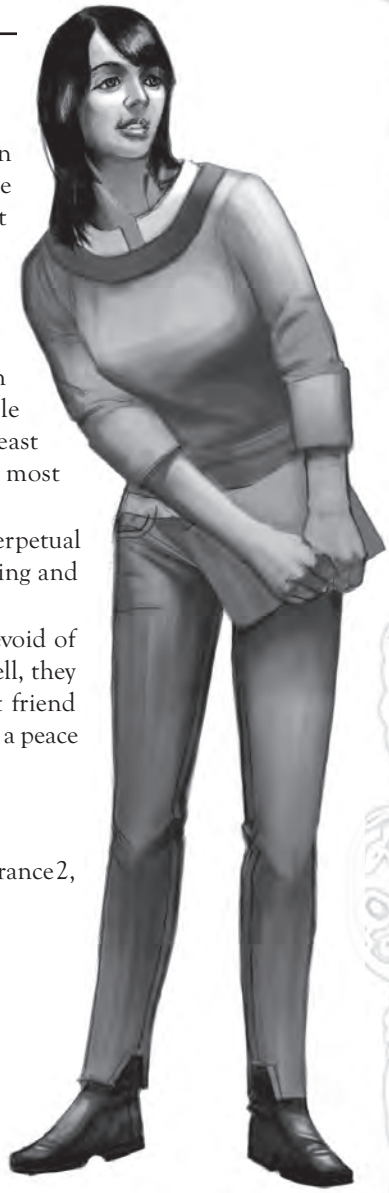
SAL AMMONIACUS (SALT OF AMMON)

Be it Catholic holy water, the Jewish mikvah or Muslim Wudu and Ghusl ablutions, all of the Abrahamic faiths have rituals involving special liquids. Upper level Order members who come to bless these waters may sprinkle a little of this salt in, which causes the reservoir to smell faintly of ammonia. Any weapon (bullets included) dunked in this water deals +2 damage to any person or creature with Legend, but only for one day.

SAMPLE CHARACTERS

SASHA CHANG

UNWITTING ORDER AGENT



History: Sasha's parents lived a wild life of self-destruction, but when her father died in a car crash her mother hit rock bottom. When everyone else abandoned her, Jesus was there to lift her back on her feet. She brought Sasha up to dedicate her life to the Savior. Sasha's sunny disposition and genuine benevolence towards everyone she met won her many friends in high school and college, where an Order agent monitoring her Bible study group decided she would be ideal bait for Scions. To date, Sasha is not aware of these manipulations and suspects nothing of the multiple "special outreach trips" which her group pays for. She gets to meet so many interesting people and spread the Good Word at the same time! So far she has persuaded at least one Scion to join the Order, with a natural skill that rivals that of the Order's most hardened proselytizers.

Appearance: Sasha is a petite young Chinese-American woman of 19 with a perpetual smile and a lively, confident gait. She wears modest, loose-fitting but stylish clothing and large glasses that, when removed, reveal a disarmingly attractive face.

Roleplaying notes: You are the nicest person anyone will ever meet, utterly devoid of guile. Although it pains you to think of the unconverted roasting in the fires of Hell, they have to come to the light themselves. You convert by example, by being the best friend possible and doing your best to model the values God taught. You are truly at peace, a peace everyone could know if they accepted their Savior.

Calling: Missionary and Ambassador of Good-will

Nature: Gallant

Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2, Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2, Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Abilities: Academics 4 (Theology), Art 3, Empathy 4, Integrity 5

Join Battle: 3

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 3, Damage 3B, Parry DV -, Speed 6, P

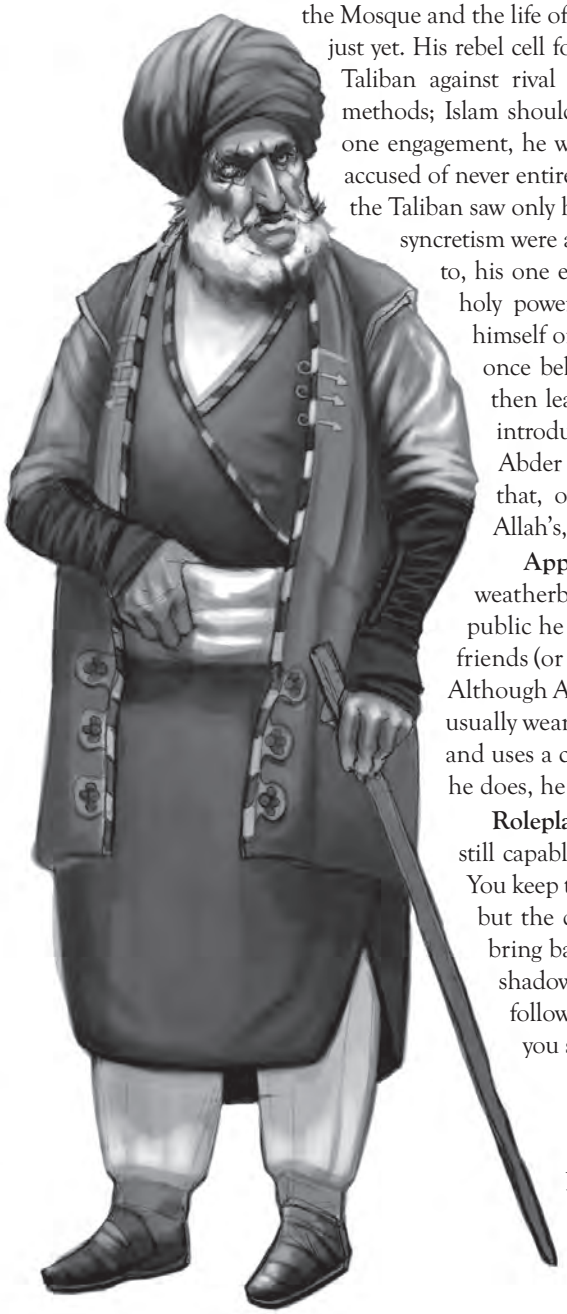
Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 2, Damage 6B, Parry DV 0, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 4, Damage 3B, Parry DV 2, Speed 4
Soak: 0L/0B
Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incap
Dodge DV: 1 Willpower: 6

ABDER AHMAD KHAN

INNER COUNCIL MEMBER

History: Born in the prosperous city of Herat, Afghanistan to a family of wealthy merchants, Abder received a traditional Muslim education at the Masjed-e Jame mosque. A gifted lad, he was on the fast track to becoming a great cleric until a Soviet invasion outlawed religious study. When the army in Herat mutinied, young Abder took up arms to help them, and was captured when the Soviets bombed the city to the ground, slaughtering thousands. Abder endured six months of torture before making his escape to join up with the Mujahadeen, fighting the guerilla war against the Russians. It was in one of these battles that shrapnel from a Katyusha rocket blinded him in his right eye.



When the last tanks of the Red Army withdrew ten years later, Abder yearned to return to the Mosque and the life of a scholar, only to find he could not put down his Kalashnikov just yet. His rebel cell found itself negotiating an uneasy alliance with the burgeoning Taliban against rival warlords. Abder admired the Taliban's zeal, but not their methods; Islam should be embraced by infidels, not forced down their throats. In one engagement, he watched the Taliban massacre a village of Muslims whom they accused of never entirely giving up the Buddhist traditions of their ancestors. Where the Taliban saw only heresy, Adber saw possibility. His arguments about the value of syncretism were answered by the rifle butt of a Talib soldier, and when he came to, his one eye witnessed a miracle: one of the "heretic" villagers wielding holy powers, driving the Talibs away. The mysterious stranger, calling himself only Ismail, told Abder an amazing story. Ismail claimed he had once believed himself to be the son of the fertility God Pancika but then learned that he was really one of Allah's special servants. Ismail introduced the fascinated Abder to the Order, and in the years since, Abder has risen to the Inner Council itself. Abder is now convinced that, once the world's heart beats in complete synchronicity with Allah's, then peace will finally envelop this devastated planet.

Appearance: Abder is a stout Pashtun man in his early 40s whose weatherbeaten appearance makes him look twenty years older. In public he covers his wounded eye with a plain cloth patch, but among friends (or to intimidate rivals) he reveals the gray, filmy orb for all to see. Although Abder adopts Western business attire when the need arises, he usually wears the traditional turban and dark shalwar kameez of his tribe and uses a cane for balance when he walks. He seldom smiles, but when he does, he radiates a sense of calm that borders on holiness.

Roleplaying Notes: Your one good eye has seen far too much, yet is still capable of viewing the sparks of the divine in the mundane world. You keep telling yourself that someday you will return to your homeland, but the days when you thought the bullet and roadside bomb could bring back the world you knew are over. Although every day the dark shadows of despair threaten to close in on you, so long as you keep following Allah's light, on the path the Order has shown you, then you still have something to live for.

Calling: Hidden Master

Nature: Visionary

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3, Charisma 4, Manipulation 5, Appearance 2, Perception 3, Intelligence 5, Wits 5

Abilities: Academics 5 (Theology), Brawl 2, Command 4, Fortitude 4, Integrity 4, Marksmanship 4, Medicine 1, Melee 2, Survival 4, Stealth 4

Join Battle: 7

Attacks:

Walking Stick: Accuracy +2, Damage +3B, Parry DV 2, Speed 6

COMPANIONS

Gilgamesh had Enkidu and Beowulf had Wiglaf. With every use of their Legendary powers, Scions pull the people around them into Fatebindings that ensure their continued meetings, for good or ill. Yet sometimes a Scion may choose take the process one step further, strengthening the bond between him and a Fatebound mortal through the sharing of the very ichor that runs in his veins.

Is heroism a transmittable condition? It was only after sharing a bed with Shamhat, Scion of Ishtar, that Enkidu developed his own heroic prowess. But when Icarus accepted knock-off wings from his heroic father, it didn't end so well for him. The benefits and the dangers of hand-me-down heroism are equally dramatic.

In game terms, there are three ascending levels of connection that Scions can establish with their Fatebound companions. Each brings increasing benefits, and increasing risks not only to the companion but also to her Scion benefactor.

STAGE ONE: ICHOR COCKTAIL

The ichor of a Scion, much like a giant's heartblood (or eitr, **Scion: Hero**, p. 315), can confer temporary powers upon mortals when injected into their veins. The Scion must actively will this to happen during the distillation process – otherwise, the mortal is just freebasing ordinary blood. The Scion could also choose to use sexual intercourse as a vector, but once again, this must be a conscious act; no one accidentally picks up heroic powers from a one-night stand. Free will is a required ingredient; a Scion cannot be mentally compelled through the supernatural powers of another being to activate the process.

Effects can include, at the Storyteller's discretion, some or all of the following:

- Up to three dots may be distributed across the subject's Physical Attributes, up to a maximum of five dots in any Attribute. Two of these dots can be used to purchase one dot in an Epic Physical Attribute.
- The subject gains +2 bonus dice for Join Battle rolls.
- The subject gains a Legend score of 1 and a Legend point pool of 3. They also gain one dot in each of the Virtues of the Scion companion's pantheon, as well as three additional dots.
- The subject is never treated as an extra.

This boost lasts about a week, after which a new injection must be administered. Multiple injections within a week do not confer any cumulative benefits.

However, like any drug, this process comes with the price of addiction. Mortals who repeatedly partake in this process begin to experience withdrawal symptoms as the heroic powers wear off at week's end, symptoms which become increasingly debilitating the longer they have been "using." The Scion suffers no penalties herself at this stage, although having an addicted sidekick utterly dependent upon her ichor may well cause all sorts of complications in her life.

Do not forget, either, that the two parties remain Fatebound. Just because they are no longer sharing ichor does not mean that the Fates have not entwined the two together. Just the act of sharing ichor (at any stage of the binding) increases the strength of their Fatebinding by +1 for every month they do so, and these increases never go away.

STAGE TWO: SYMPATHETIC LINK

If a mortal companion continues for several months to partake in heroic ichor in this manner, he and his benefactor proceed to this stage. Alternatively, the Scion donor may initiate this stage right from the get-go through conscious act of will, as enacted by a ritual appropriate to the pantheon of her divine parent. Scions of the Atzlanti, for example, may perform an elaborate blood-sharing ritual involving plenty of slit veins and offerings to the sun, while a Scion of the Aesir could swear a blood oath upon her weapon, mixing her blood and her partner's across the blade.

Stage two works like stage one, except fresh infusions of ichor are no longer necessary. The boosted attributes now last indefinitely, but a sympathetic link is also created between the Scion and her sidekick, affording the following abilities:

• **Empathy:** When one feels significant pain, so does the other. While no actual access to thoughts is granted, empathic "leakage" is common: if one partner is in a bad mood, his bad vibes may leak into the thoughts of the other. If either partner dies, the other goes into a deep depression and must make a (Stamina + Fortitude) roll against difficulty 4. If he fails, the character loses all temporary Willpower points, and remains in that state until he can overcome his depression.

• **Telepresence:** Scions and their companions with a bond of this strength can remotely piggyback upon the senses of their partner, regardless of the distance involved (even if one partner is in the Otherworld while another remains on Earth). By using this ability, a hero can be "present" while his unassuming sidekick does some reconnaissance, or the sidekick can be a hidden witness to the Scion's adventures. The piggybacking party loses her own powers of sensory perception (engaging in telepresence while driving is not recommended), but instead experiences the sights, smells, sounds and tactile sensations of her companion. Her companion is aware of her presence but suffers no other penalties.

• **Legendary Cooperation:** A duo can become truly dynamic, solving a mystery or building a device with the kind of speed that only comes from the most perfect cooperation; treat any such action as "full teamwork" with +1 additional die.

DRAWBACKS

A sympathetic link can be among the most intense and terrifying experiences for both participants. Imagine a pair of lovers who can feel one another other's pleasure concurrent with their own, or a pair of fighters who never have to speak to coordinate their moves. On the other hand, much of human society depends upon us *not* knowing one another's thoughts. Think of how many white lies, exaggerations and minor deceptions we use every day. Anyone who has wondered what his best friend or lover *really* thinks of him might not like the answer, or might misinterpret a given thought or emotion at an inopportune time.

If the sympathetic link is maintained for long enough, all but the most mentally-disciplined can become lost trying to untangle one set of thoughts and emotions from another. One partner may start to believe she is the other, with her own memories and reactions occasionally being overwritten by that of the other; once per week or at the Storyteller's discretion, each character needs to succeed in a (Stamina + Integrity) roll or else suffer some Storyteller-determined penalty due to their mental cohesion.

BREAKING THE LINK

Severing the sympathetic link is possible, through another conscious act of the Scion, accompanied by a ritual. The strength of the Fatebinding (which increases by +1 for every month they were linked) does not decrease after this parting. In addition, the mortal retains all of her previously boosted stats.

At this stage, however, there are significant consequences to both parties. While the mortal suffers withdrawal symptoms as per stage one, in addition both he *and the Scion* are plunged into a state of depression and numbness. On rare occasions, one or the other may develop other mental illnesses like bipolar disorder, schizophrenia or selective memory loss.

Also note that, however much a mortal may wish to discontinue his participation, only the Scion may break the bond. An irresponsible Scion who fails to do this sews disaster in his path: Dido pined away for Aeneas, unable to shut him from her mind until she was moved to take her own life. Medea, abandoned by Jason, did the same and took her children with her.

STAGE THREE: TELEMANIPULATION

Should a Scion and mortal companion remain joined together for a year or more, then they proceed to stage three. Scions and their companions at this stage can now remotely *take over* the body of their partner. Much like with telepresence, the piggybacker's body becomes inert and vulnerable until the spirit returns from its vacation in someone else's flesh. The host retains her mental perceptions, but loses complete control of her body until the visitor decides to leave.

If a Scion's mortal companion is in danger, the Scion can "step inside" his body, working it like a puppet. A shy companion can become a perfect public speaker if her Scion partner has Epic Charisma. Physical Attributes are non-transferable, but Mental and Social Attributes, not to mention all Abilities, can be expressed through the host body. Similarly, the companion can experience what it's like to be a hero by stepping inside the body of her Scion companion for a while and benefiting from her divine abilities. This transaction can be willing, or it can be imposed with a successful Willpower contest by either party.

BREAKING THE LINK

Needless to say, telemanipulation requires the strongest bonds of trust between both parties, as the potentials for abuse are staggering. Should the companionship sour, at this point breaking the bond requires the active conscious will of *both* parties. If one tries to sever the bond and the other doesn't agree, the backlash may kill them both. Even if both agree and both survive the backlash, both suffer the same ill effects as a separation from stage two, and gain an *additional* level of permanent Fatebinding on top of the existing +1 per month.

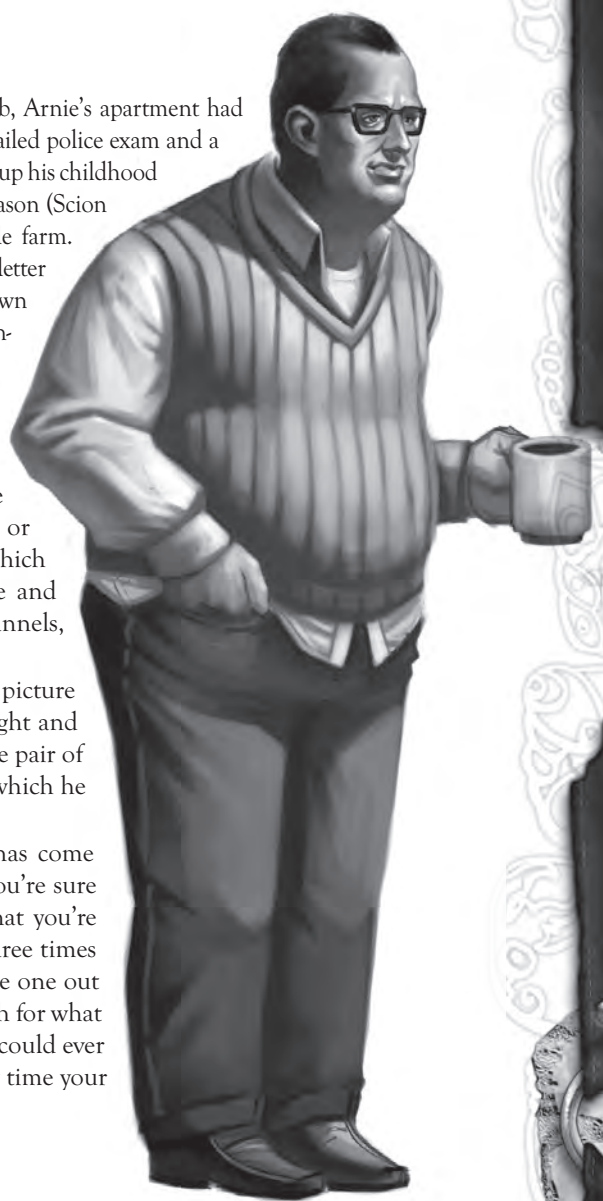
ANIMAL COMPANIONS

There are many noble four-footed or feathered companions who served a mythic hero admirably. While Titans make monsters out of ordinary animals by turning them into nemeans, a Scion can feed or inject his ichor into the body of a noble beast to make it a companion. The animal gains the same bonuses as a human recipient would, and a dot applied to Mental Attributes can raise the beast to human levels of intelligence (which will then accept further dots of Mental Attribute boosting, just like a human companion). An ichor-bonded animal's lifespan also dramatically increases (Odysseus' dog Argus lived over 30 years, through the Trojan war and two decades afterwards, until his master returned to Ithaca). Animals cannot develop stage two or stage three connections with their human hero, no matter how much ichor they ingest. Instead, after a month of regularly consuming ichor, the animal no longer needs fresh infusions – the effects become permanent.

While bonded human companions may rebel against the hero to which they are bound, an animal bound by ichor becomes infinitely loyal. She will perform any mission within her abilities, and even die for her human friend without hesitation. Should the Scion be so heartless, she will tolerate near limitless abuse (unless the animal has had her intelligence boosted to human levels; then she will not be ceaselessly forgiving). Should the Scion die, his trusted beast will utterly lose the will to live. Should the animal die, the Scion may sink into a deep depression as per a human companion's link-severing (p. 142).

ARNIE BANK

FAITHFUL COMPANION



History: Forty-something, unmarried and in a dead-end accounting job, Arnie's apartment had become a mausoleum to his unfulfilled dreams – a failed Army physical, a failed police exam and a stack of old fantasy and science fiction novels gathering dust. Arnie had given up his childhood dreams of adventure until one day Fate finally called upon him: Davey Gleason (Scion of Thor) and a titanspawn came crashing through the walls of his cubicle farm. As his coworkers fled in terror, Arnie bravely held his ground, raised his letter opener high and plunged it into the shoulder of the monster. The titanspawn laughed off Arnie's heroism and hurled him through several layers of cloth-covered anodized aluminum, but the distraction was all Davey needed to gain the advantage and smite his foe. Impressed by the unlikely hero before him, Davey helped heal Arnie's wounds, and ever since, Arnie has served as Davey's faithful sidekick.

Office-supply-wielding skills notwithstanding, Arnie's best resource now is time: at home collecting workman's comp, lacking friends or relatives to compete for his time, he has near-limitless free hours in which to do internet research for Davey or to do drive-by reconnaissance and tailing. Whatever Davey needs, Arnie procures through the many channels, legal or illegal, that the online world affords.

Appearance: Look up "unassuming" in the dictionary and Arnie's picture would be there... except even that would be too distinctive. Overweight and balding, Arnie dresses in drab collared shirts and khakis. He owns one pair of dress shoes, one pair of loafers and one pair of horn-rimmed glasses which he needs to wear when he uses the computer.

Roleplaying Notes: After waiting your entire life, your dream has come true – you are a part of a heroic story. Your role is important, and you're sure Davey knows that, but still, you do everything you can to prove that you're useful. You try and anticipate his needs before he asks and deliver three times more than you're asked for. Occasionally you daydream that *you're* the one out there fighting evil with your fists, but you're more than grateful enough for what you've got. You see more adventure than most "big tough hero types" could ever dream of, and you now carry that secret pride inside your chest every time your troubles press upon your self-esteem.

Calling: Sidekick
Nature: Bravo
Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2, Charisma 1, Manipulation 1, Appearance 1, Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3
Virtues: Courage 2, Endurance 2, Loyalty 3, Valor 1
Abilities: Investigation 4, Awareness 2, Computers 3, Integrity 3, Stealth 3
Supernatural Powers:
Epic Attributes: Epic Stamina 1 (Inner Furnace)
Companion Bond: Stage 2: Sympathetic Link
Join Battle: 5
Attacks:
Clinch: Accuracy 3, Damage 3B, Parry DV -, Speed 6, P
Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 2, Damage 6B, Parry DV 0, Speed 5
Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 4, Damage 3B, Parry DV 2, Speed 4
Soak: 0L/1B
Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incap
Dodge DV: 1 **Willpower:** 5
Legend: 1 **Legend Points:** 3

CREATING A PANTHEON

Wherever man treads, he does so beneath the watchful eyes of some Gods or other. Every civilization has created (or credited its creation to) its own pantheon of deities, indigenous to their region or borrowed and modified from those of other cultures. This gives you plenty of precedent for creating, borrowing and reshaping your own pantheons for use in **Scion**.

Gods aren't just like any character, created as a set of statistics. They are more than just characters – they are also ideas and concepts personified. For all their power, Gods are bound to specific roles that define them. Their personalities are intrinsically linked to these roles, and they create Scions in large part to further their ambitions and goals in the World. When you are designing a pantheon, you are also not only creating its Gods, you are establishing the flavor of all their Scions.

So how do you begin this ambitious act of theogenesis?

STEP ONE: ESTABLISH A HISTORY

Maybe you are inventing your own pantheon entirely, based upon the religious beliefs of a society designed entirely by your imagination. If so, that's terrific – you are adding whole new dimensions of creativity to the game and giving your players a unique experience. It is likely, though, that you will base your pantheon on an existing culture or belief system. Even a cursory browsing through encyclopedias and online sites can help you become familiar with thousands of human cultures, both ancient and modern, and the Gods in which they believe.

For our example, we'll create an ancient Russian pantheon. Russian mythology extends back thousands of years and combines elements of pagan Norse, Wendish and Danish mythology (among others) before being further transformed by Christianity by the 1300s. There is no agreed-upon formal name for the Russian pantheon, so we'll call them "The Rus," after one of three mythological brothers who went on to found the three great Slavic peoples. Rus, as his name suggests, is the mythological progenitor of the Russian nation.

To incorporate the Rus into the **Scion** cosmology, we'll play upon their Norse roots, including belief in the World Tree. The Slavic Gods were also multi-headed fusions, so let's wrap that into the canon of the Titan war.

Example. During the ancient battle that bound the Titans, the Aesir defeated the Titan Rod's two chief avatars (the three-headed Triglav and the four-headed Svantevit) by splitting them up into component Gods. These Gods, now liberated from the oppressive group mind of their Titan parent, changed sides in the war and joined the battle against the primal deities, becoming the Rus. Ever since, the Rus have struggled with issues of dual and paradoxical identities. As a reward for the Rus' bravery, the victorious Gods gave over the realm of Mount Meru to become Svarga, the Slavic pantheon's new home.

Think about who your Gods are, how they came to be and where they live now. There will be stories behind all of that, and as you learn – or create – those stories, you will come to understand your pantheon better.

Once you've done that, think a little bit about how your Gods have adapted to the modern World and the reality of the war with the Titans. Some details might

require you to flesh out which Gods are in your pantheon first (in step three, p. 146), but you can get a sense of where you want the history to go, and go back to fill in details later. Here's a completed version of the Rus' modern history as an example.

Example: No event has scarred the Rus as much as the Russian Revolution. Perun and Veles had been locked in competition since their genesis: Perun ruled Svarga from atop the world tree, while the serpentine Veles crept up and down the trunk, harassing the Thunder God by stealing his cattle, children and occasionally his wife. Perun, his patience at an end, defeated Veles in personal combat and hurled him to the base of the tree. Veles spent millennia plotting his vengeance, and finally brought his scheme to fruition when he invaded the dreams of Vladimir Lenin while disguised in Perun's form, convincing him that communism would transform Russia into a land of honor and justice. The revolution gave birth to a new God: The Citizen, the spirit of the people.

Just as the Russian people were swept up in overthrowing the old authority, The Citizen turned upon Perun and the other Rus. Several of the Gods in the pantheon transformed into their darker aspects: Belobog became Chernobog and Dievas became Marzanna. Together, with the secret aid of titanspawn, they managed to overthrow Perun, sending him and the remaining Slavic Gods into exile. Although The Citizen sat on the treetop throne, Veles secretly ruled as the God of corruption, twisting the Citizen's noble values. Svarga soon fell into shambles. Perun, drunken, fat and disheveled, is trying desperately to get back into shape, reassemble the pantheon and restore justice and order to the realm.

STEP TWO: DETERMINE VIRTUES

Here we come to another important part of designing a pantheon: deciding their philosophical outlook (and thus, their Virtues). The Pesedjet are defined by their devotion to social order, while the Aesir are consumed by preparations for Ragnarök. Even Gods need something to believe in. What beliefs guide your pantheon?

In creating the Rus, we can look over the old myths as well as Russian history. The universe is a cruel place, and the lot of humanity is particularly cruel, but the Rus did not make the universe – they just have to live in it. They are at once a passionate and melancholy group of Gods, bitterly conflicted with one another and yet intensely social and bound by family ties.

The closest matching Virtues in the **Scion** books would seem to be Courage, Expression and Valor. Yet Slavic culture tends to incorporate these values into a thoroughly fatalistic worldview that denies the possibility for such things, to the point of ridicule, so the Rus should embody that aspect as well. Thus the Rus are at the same time wonderful company and implacable enemies, to each other and to the World. The war with the Titans is just one more struggle in an eternal series, to be born with both dignity and black humor. Endurance would seem to be an appropriate Virtue to capture this idea. As such, we decide that the Virtues of the Rus are Courage, Endurance, Expression and Valor.

STEP THREE: CHOOSE YOUR GODS

One thing you are likely to discover is that even a single, isolated culture produces many, many Gods – the Hindu pantheon alone supposedly contains 330 *million* deities! Clearly, you will want to pick and choose those that will represent your own pantheons.

To help you in this process, most pantheons have Gods that represent the following concepts that are universally important to all cultures: the sun, the moon, creation, fertility, love, death, the underworld, war, law and justice, the arts and sciences, the seasons and the harvest. Different religions may make one God responsible for many of these, or have several Gods responsible for just one, but usually most of these concepts will be present. Six to twelve Gods is a good number to aim for.

From the dozens of Slavic Gods, let's pick the following roster for our example:

- **Chernobog**: God of winter and darkness. At times he becomes **Belebog**, God of spring and light.
- **Marzanna**: Goddess of the harvest and reaping, including the reaping of dead souls. Also the Goddess of the marketplace. At times she becomes **Dievas**, Goddess of spirit and purity.
- **Perun**: God of lightning and thunder.
- **Poerewit**: God of the woods and travelers.
- **Sieba**: Goddess of fertility and love.
- **Veles**: Perun's great rival, God of wealth and trickery.
- **Zislbog**: Goddess of the moon and seedlings.

We didn't include Jarilo the harvest God or Krsnik the fire God, but you can. Unless you're starting from scratch, your source material will likely contain far more possibilities – many of them contradictory – than you could ever include, and the Gods you ultimately choose will determine how players view it. Adding Krsnik, for example, means that there will be Scions of his acting in his name, which may be something you want for your cycle or something you want to avoid. Make some decisions, create your pantheon the way that best suits your cycle and discuss your decisions with your players.

STEP FOUR: CREATE DETAILS FOR YOUR GODS

You should create details for your Gods, but you don't need to create statistics. Creating game statistics for a God can defeat its purpose as a literal deus ex machina for you to use in your stories (until the time comes for your players' Gods to challenge them, of course). It's best to begin with a basic outline of your Gods' personalities and general powers.

Aliases: Because they have been worshipped in different eras by different cultures in different languages, most Gods go by multiple names.

Example: Perun, the chief God of the Rus, is known alternately as Perkūnas, Perkons and Perkwunos.

Description: Describe each God's appearance and *raison d'être*, both in the Overworld and in the variety of guises she might undertake when cavorting with modern mortals. Think about her relationships with the other Gods in her pantheon, and any Fate to which she may be bound.

Example: Perun is a noble protector, lord of order, justice, lightning and thunder. He appears in dazzling golden armor, a mighty eagle riding astride his shoulders. Perun wields a bow with stone arrows that turn into lightning bolts, and also possesses magical golden apples that explode into ball lightning when tossed. He has battled many titanspawn and other entities that seek to harm the World, including his divine brother Veles, whom he once hurled into the watery underworld with the command, "Well, there is your place, stay there!" Although he has fallen on hard times of late, he is destined to make a comeback and defeat the forces of darkness.

All of the above was culled from existing legends about Perun, with the easy conversion of Slavic monsters into titanspawn. To develop Perun's manifestations in a modern setting for our game, we'll think of roles that evoke Perun's qualities of bravery and order. The Gods know such values are not tied to any particular social class (Aristotle recognized that "even a slave" could embody heroism), so try and keep that in mind.

Example: In the mortal World Perun has appeared as a military officer, a judge, a factory foreman and a crusading journalist. Even in humble clothing, he is always regal.

Finally, map out the qualities of the Scions your God tends to give birth to, and how she relates to them once they are born (including how she may Visit them or how she handles her Relics and Birthrights).

Example: While an absent father to his Scions (his duties to the universe must take precedence over personal desires), Perun is not stingy with Boons and Birthrights when he does make an appearance. His Scions tend to be similarly obsessed with justice, or at least order. They will defend what they believe is right and never flinch from a confrontation. They may not be subtle or nuanced, but at least you always know where they stand.

Associated powers: Think about what qualities are this God's personal trademarks. Look to existing legends for cues. If you are creating your God from whole cloth, consider writing some stories featuring that God first to see if any patterns or personality traits emerge. Epic Abilities should be extensions of these traits.

Example: Perun is always displaying leadership and martial bravery in Slavic legends, which seem to call for Epic Charisma, Epic Stamina, Epic Strength, Guardian, Justice and War, with the addition of Sky for his association with storms. We'll also give him the Rus pantheon Purview of Duality, which we'll create in step five.

Abilities: What six abilities is your deity really known for?

Example: It's tempting to give Perun every physical ability in the book, but since we're limited to six, we'll decide that Brawl and Melee are more appropriate than Athletics, since most of the tales have the Slavic Thunder God duking it out as opposed to doing handsprings around the room. Not forgetting those apples, we'll add Thrown. Since Perun is no mere bruiser but a noble leader as well, we'll add Presence and Integrity. Finally, Fortitude seems appropriate given the general Rus Virtue of Endurance.

Rivals: This includes enemies both within the pantheon and Gods of a similar Purview in other Pantheons.

Example: In Perun's case, he is rivaled by Veles, Chernobog and Marzanna in the Rus, as well as Thor, Tyr, Izanami, Ogoun and probably others as well outside of it. Perun may be courageous and just, but he's hardly diplomatic or compromising!

STEP FIVE: CREATE PANTHEON-SPECIFIC PURVIEWS

Now that you have your pantheon mapped out, it's time to think of some of the cool stuff they can bestow upon their Scions. Think of the nature of your Gods and how that nature colors the powers they would confer. Is there a core value that seems to be intrinsic to your pantheon, something that goes beyond physical abilities and speaks instead to a group culture? Think of trends and stereotypes, both positive and negative. Look to the existing Purviews for inspiration: the Dodekatheon's focus on personal excellence translates into their purview of Arete, while the soul-stewarding nature of the Loa manifests itself in Cheval.

Example: The Rus-specific purview will be called Duality. *Several of the Russian Gods are actually two Gods in one, a yin-yang duo that represent opposing concepts, both necessary to the universe but only one of which is dominant at any given time. What better symbol of Endurance than to be both sides of the coin, able to change to fit the needs of the situation? A Scion employing Duality Boons can overcome obstacles by taking on their very properties. Where others might see this as paradox, Scions of the Slavic Gods merely consider their approach to fit with a more realistic picture of the universe.*

Now we have to break Duality down into its component powers. It can be useful to begin by dividing your Purview into power levels accessible to heroes, demigods and Gods, and then order them from there. Powers that confer only slight advantages should have low costs. As the benefits increase, so too should the requirements, not only in terms of Willpower and Legend points but also the rituals required to enact them, and possibly some kind of flaw or downside; the Fates have decreed that with power comes a price, and as a Storyteller you will want to have at least some check on rampant power-gaming.

In each case, think of appropriate dice pools based on the mortal abilities that these powers seem to enhance. For example, Transmute Pain is all about boosting one's own physical and mental endurance, so (Stamina + Integrity) is a good combination of Attribute and Ability to roll. Since Know Thy Enemy requires one to do just that, Perception and Empathy are required. The first three levels of Duality are given below as an example.

Transmute Pain (Duality •)

Dice Pool: Stamina + Integrity

Cost: 1 Willpower

The life of a hero can be painful, full of loss and disappointment. The Scion employing this Boon can reduce the amount of physical pain he feels by inflicting physical pain upon others. In game terms, for every blow he lands on a foe, the Scion can ignore any health-related modifiers that are reducing his dice rolls. The Boon is enacted through drinking a shot of strong alcohol (traditionally vodka) and lasts for one scene. Since pain can be suppressed but never entirely destroyed, this Boon comes with an additional cost: the next scene, those modifiers return with an additional -1.

Know Thy Enemy (Duality ••)

Dice Pool: Perception + Empathy

Cost: 1 Legend

The Scion can, through meditation and study, assume the personality of her foe. She will need some token from the foe to activate the Boon: a scrap of clothing, a treasured possession or a piece of hair or skin. Use of this Boon does not grant access to the thoughts of the Scion's opponent – she is only becoming a simulacrum of her enemy, not actually touching his mind – but for the duration of the effect she thinks like he does, reacts to stimuli like he does, can ascertain with reasonable certainty the kind of plans he would make. Frequent use of this power demands Willpower rolls to not lose her own personality and become a permanent copy of her enemy.

Uses per Story	Difficulty
2	3
3	4
4+	5

One with the Storm (Duality •••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 Willpower + Legend

In hostile environmental conditions (extreme cold, driving rain, parching heat), the Scion can actually alter the properties of her body to reflect the climate around her. Her body temperature raises or lowers to match the world around her, or her skin takes on tough and rain-resistant properties. This ability lasts for one scene.

STEP SIX: CREATE BIRTHRIGHTS (OPTIONAL)

What other kinds of gifts might your Gods have to offer? Think of the traditional creatures, weapons and vehicles associated with your pantheon. Each should have its own story and mythical gravitas. When studying existing myths, always be thinking about potential game functions. Think about the things that benefit player characters – boosts to Abilities and Attributes, means of delivering more damage or recovering more health, or access to powers that they wouldn't otherwise have. Then couple one or more of these bonuses to the mythical item.

Example: In Slavic mythology, there is something called "live water" which flowed from the source of the World Tree and was tended to by the three fates. Live water conferred courage, wisdom and precognition, while "dead water," despite its name, healed wounds and diseases. A bottle filled with either of these waters could give the same powers to Scions – in game terms, live water gives access to the Prophecy Purview, perhaps, while dead water gives access to the Health Purview.

STEP SEVEN: ROUND OUT YOUR MYTHIC WORLD

Once your pantheon is ready, populate its universe with heroes and monsters. Slavic mythology is full of the latter, from giant beasts like the dragon-like Zmey to the infamous witch Baba Yaga who lives in a house on chicken-feet-stilts. Feel free to tweak the nature of some of the creatures if you like – the Slavic vodyanoi, or water sprites, appear in some stories as helpful sprites and others as wicked tricksters: Decide which role (if not both!) they will play in your stories. Include some entities that are neither good nor evil, like the Gamayun, a woman-headed bird that doled out prophecies to Slavic Gods and heroes alike.

As far as heroes go, Russian skazka or fairy tales offer plenty of examples. There is Ivan Tsarevich (Ivan the Wise), who befriended mythic beasts like the firebird and the grey wolf to the extent that they even brought him back from the dead once so he could defeat his wicked brothers. The beautiful and crafty peasant girl Vassilisa outwitted Baba Yaga herself and won the heart of a prince. Scions of the Rus are modern versions of these heroes who embody the values of familial loyalty, duty and quick thinking. Keep in mind that your players will want to feel like they are taking on roles that are enjoyable to act out, but as long as your players know what they're in for ahead of time, they will likely take up the mantle of your new pantheon and be ready for epic questing in no time.

CREATING TITANSPAWN

What are heroes without monsters to fight? In epic tales, monsters are more than just opponents; they *define* the heroes who face them. How can we understand Beowulf's fealty and determination to defend his people without comparing him to Grendel, the embodiment of antisocial rage? Snow White's purity and innocence are better understood by contrast with the vanity and calculating nature of the Black Queen. But a good monster also darkly reflects the hero's own traits. Beowulf's second opponent, Grendel's mother, is fighting to avenge her son, just as Beowulf has been fighting to avenge his kinsmen.

The Titans, the ultimate enemies of the characters in **Scion**, are nothing *but* metaphysical concepts. Although your players will tackle their minions (the titanspawn) on a physical level, even the minor monsters among them should be more than just a collection of claws, jaws and tentacles. Sure, the players should enjoy bashing frost giants – that's part of why they come to your gaming table. But what the giants represent on a symbolic level should matter as much as the stats on their page. That way, when the players defeat them, they have not just racked up experience points and looted the corpses; they have triumphed over some metaphysical challenge as well.

As a Storyteller you shouldn't necessarily hit your players over the head with this symbolism – sometimes a bunch of ogres to beat up is just a bunch of ogres to beat up – but **Scion** gives you the opportunity to design titanspawn with an eye towards the larger themes of the game.

STEP ONE: DECIDE ON A CONCEPT

The story you're telling will likely dictate the kinds of titanspawn you'll want to create. A desert scenario is perfectly suited for giant sandworms, scarabs and carrion birds. An underwater mission may call for some kind of multi-tentacled horror or seductive-yet-deadly mermaids. Of course, you don't want to just play to stereotypes (your players have probably seen all the same movies you have). Instead of the unstoppable man-eating shark, why not throw them some kind of evil dolphin? Dolphins are mischievous, highly intelligent and able to communicate silently over vast distances – they could be diabolical nemean creatures in the right setting. Or maybe you already have a monster in mind from existing mythology. Books or websites can help you find all sorts of traditional foes associated with any pantheon. For our sample titanspawn, we'll plumb the depths of Russian and Eastern European mythology, and there we find the Indrik.

The Indrik is an enormous bull with the tail of a mouse and the head of a horse, ending in a snout bearing a long and deadly horn. Because of its similarity to the Western European myth of the unicorn (indeed, the name Indrik is an anagram for the Russian word for that noble horse), this creature will potentially have the benefit of playing with characters' expectations. In some myths the Indrik is a helpful beast who saves humans from drought, but for his reinvention as a titanspawn we'll focus on another aspect of the Indrik myth, his fanatical territoriality.

STEP TWO: PICK A POWER LEVEL

Be sure to adjust your monster's power level to be a "fit" with the player characters and the kind of adventure you want to send them on. A sewer rat morphed into nemean proportions might challenge a novice Band full of characters at Legend 1 or 2, but Legend 6 demigods will quickly make ratatouille out of it. However, if you're planning on throwing a Typhonian ratzilla at bush-league characters, there is not much they can do except run. Maybe that's what you want them to do – just be sure your monster fits the needs of your story.

Our Indrik will be designed to fight mid-to-high range Scions, so we'll keep him a nemean, but a powerful one, with a Legend of 7.

STEP THREE: DETERMINE THE TITAN'S ORIGINS

If you have adapted your monster from existing mythology, then you have some ready-made traits and supernatural abilities to convert over to the game system. If you have created your own titanspawn, or if you want to play with your players' own expectations of a well-known mythic creature, you will likely add some of your own twists.

According to Slavic legends, the Indrik Zvier is the lord of all animals, who lives (depending on the story) underground or on "saint mountain" in the Altai range in Central Asia. Perun went underground to fight the Indrik and, upon winning, secured the beast's loyalty as an ally. Since we're designing the Indrik as an enemy, we'll say that the beast has reverted to his old loyalties now that the Titans are loose again. As far as its parent Titan, despite the many associations of the Indrik with waterways and streams, his ties to the Earth seem to align him with the Titan Terra, as one of the many monsters birthed by Gaia.

STEP FOUR: CREATE STATISTICS FOR YOUR TITANSPAWN.

A titanspawn, just like any other character, needs Abilities, Attributes, Traits and Powers. In the case of the Indrik, legends already provide for inspiration for those powers. An entirely self-created monster should have powers consistent with whatever origin you've designed for it.

THE INDRIK

Attributes: Str 10, Dex 8, Sta 10; Cha 4, Man 0, App 1; Per 3, Int 3, Wits 4

These statistics reflect the Indrik's awesome physical prowess and his somewhat less impressive intelligence. The beast is not stupid by any means, but neither is he a great thinker. His high Charisma

score reflects his legendary ability to command beasts, but his non-existent Manipulation score shows he's not terribly subtle or crafty.

Virtues: Ambition 3, Malice 4, Rapacity 4, Zealotry 5

These are typical virtues for a titanspawn. Our Indrik's high Zealotry score reflects his identity as guardian of the Earth and all animals, in undying allegiance to Terra.

Abilities: Animal Ken 10, Athletics 4, Awareness 4, Brawl 4, Survival 10, Stealth 3, Fortitude 3, Presence 4

The Indrik is a master of all animals and nature in its native land, hence his unearthly scores in Animal Ken and Survival. A king of beasts definitely needs a high Presence score.

Supernatural Powers:

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength (Holy Rampage, Uplifting Might, Divine Wrath, Mighty Heave, Knockback Attack), Epic Stamina (Damage Conversion, Body Armor, Inner Furnace, Devourer, Divine Fortitude), Epic Dexterity (Lightning Sprinter)

Nemean hide: The Indrik's tough skin provides 6A/10L/10B to its soak.

Fire snort: The Indrik is able to shoot a burst of flame from its nose. The roll for the attack is (Dexterity + Athletics), and it has an accuracy bonus of +3 and a damage bonus of +5L. The attack is a Speed 4 action.

Create water: With a stamp of his hoof, the Indrik can command any ditch, pothole or ravine to fill with water. Every round brings another thousand gallons of water until and unless the Indrik stops the process.

Earthquake: The Indrik's hoof can also produce tectonic reverberations with its power. Treat this as Shaping (Earth) (**Scion: Hero**, p. 142), but only for the purposes of destruction, not creation.

Boons: Animal Command (all), Animal Communication (all), Night Eyes, Safely Interred.

Join Battle: 8

Attacks:

Trample: Accuracy 10, Damage 15L, Parry DV -, Speed 5

Gore: Accuracy 10, Damage 20L, Parry DV 10, Speed 8

Flame Snort: Accuracy 10, Damage 7L, Parry DV -, Speed 4

Soak: 8A/16L/20B

Health Levels: –0 x20/-1x10/-2x10/-4x5/Incap

Dodge DV: 11, **Willpower:** 9

Legend: 7, **Legend Points:** 49

Other Notes: The Indrik-beast, along with its fantastic powers, has a few fantastic weaknesses as well. He cannot leave his underground cave by day, because broad sunlight will cause him to turn to stone.

Giving your titanspawn its own special weakness gives your players the opportunity to strategize, as opposed to just wearing down your monster in a protracted brawl. Of course, finding out the beast's weakness should be no easy matter.

Trophy: The Indrik legend speaks of the horn's healing powers. The horn can cure any disease and serve as an antidote to any poison. It can be used an indefinite number of times, but if exposed to sunlight, the horn turns irreparably to stone and becomes nothing more than an impressive-looking paperweight.

STEP FIVE: FINISHING TOUCHES

Now to make our Indrik more than just cannon fodder. As an aspect of the Titan of the Earth, the Indrik represents the concept of territoriality, of the notion that this piece of land is *mine* and not *yours*, and therefore you can't come play here. He embodies the principle behind every sign that says "no trespassing" or "keep off the grass," at a much more primal level. Even his own flaw, the inability to come outside in the light of day, is in keeping with this principle – the Indrik has his own boundaries which must remain inviolate.

A Storyteller seeking to use the Indrik will find him a good opponent to place as a guardian, a gatekeeper who forbids passage. When roleplaying the Indrik, give him the personality of every officious security guard or self-important hall monitor, petty in his defense of a patch of ground because that's all he has to give his existence meaning. Imagine titanic power in the hands of such a stooge, and you awaken everyone's worst experiences at the hands of some authoritarian thug – and that's exactly what a monster should do, remind us of old nightmares. Only then is the hero's rage both realistic and justified, and we cheer her on as she goes on to smite the foes that we only dream about overcoming. Do the same with your monster, and your players will walk away more satisfied than if they just mowed over yet another crowd of hideous mutant squids.

RELIC DESIGN

Relics are very freeform in design, but sometimes it's a little unclear on how many dots a particular aspect of the Relic's powers are worth. Below is a list of various aspects of a Relic and suggested dot amounts. Simple choose which aspects are appropriate for the Relic in question and add the dots together. Note that these are just suggestions – some of the Relics we've created may not conform to this list because it was felt that the Relic in question should have more or less dots. Feel free to adjust your Relics in the same way.

PURVIEWS

Dots	Effect
•	1 Purview: Animal, Chaos, Darkness, Death, Earth, Fertility, Fire, Guardian, Health, Justice, Moon, Psychopomp, Sky, Sun, War, Water; Magic, Mystery, Prophecy.

BIRTHRIGHT CONNECTION

Dots	Effect
•	Link a single Birthright to the Relic's use; must expend 1 Legend.
•	May completely regenerate any Followers or Guides destroyed that are linked to it.

ENHANCEMENT

Dots	Effect
•	Gain a +1 to an equipment bonus.
•	Gain a +1 to a weapon's Accuracy, Damage or Defense.
•	Gain a -1 to a weapon's Speed (max. 4, or 3 if the item normally has a 4).
•	Add Legend x5 yards to the weapon's Range.
•	Gain a +1/+1 to an armor's bashing and lethal soaks.
•	Gain a -1 to an armor's Fatigue or Mobility rating.

POWERS

Dots	Effect
•	Add wearer's Legend to any single (Attribute + Ability) roll.
•	Dissuade thieves who steal the item, killing one of their loved ones until it is returned.
•	Doubles the Duration of a given Purview of Boons.
•	Reduce the Difficulty of activating a Boon performed ritually using the Relic by -1.
•	Once per day may reroll a failed roll as though using Legend, though does not Fatebind.
•	May mimic the effects of a single one-dot Boon.
•	Create an emotion within a target struck by a weapon or touched by item. Requires a (Charisma + Presence + Legend) roll, opposed by target's (Willpower + Integrity + Legend), and lasting for a number of days equal to the number of successes over the opponent's roll.
•	Melee weapon can strike at a distant target out to Legend x5 yards away.
•	Increase efficiency of one aspect of a Knack.
•	Add +1 to DVs.
•	Item may alter its basic shape, length, color or some other physical attribute.
•	Reduce die penalty for multiple actions by 1.
•	An ammunition-based weapon never needs reloading.
•	A fuel- or energy-dependent machine no longer needs either.
••	Add wearer's Legend to any roll using a single Ability.
••	May mimic the effects of a single two-dot Boon.
••	Covering that completely regenerates a single item placed under it overnight.
••	Item may be used by a ghost or other intangible creature.
•••	Add wearer's Legend to any roll using a single Attribute.
•••	Double the Legend award given by an Itzli Boon if the blood resulting from the ritual is placed within.
•••	May mimic the effects of a single three-dot Boon.
•••	May communicate via a medium (mirrors, fires, television sets, etc) and use Boons within Legend x5 miles.
••••	Undertake an Underworld quest to return a mortal or Scion (of lower Legend than user) back to life.
••••	May mimic the effects of a single four-dot Boon.
•••••	May mimic the effects of a single five-dot Boon.

STORY IDEAS

You have read everything we've put out for **Scion**. The Aztec gods' names now roll easily off your tongue and you can rattle off the Ranged Weapons table from memory. You have a great, well-rounded troupe of players chomping at the bit to don the robes and weapons of Epic Heroes and set off on quests that bards will sing about for centuries to come.

So what do you do now?

Any roleplaying game is only as good as the tales its Storyteller weaves, and even the most experienced of Storytellers has her dry spells or needs some occasional garnish to her otherwise well-prepared feast of adventures. This section provides a panoply

of potential story ideas, divided first by pantheon and then into two story types.

Seeds – These are designed to be short, interchangeable blocks of action or intrigue that can be modified to add an extra hurdle or encounter to a plot you've already written. Alternatively, you can keep them in reserve for those times when players unexpectedly race through a session ahead of schedule and you don't want to be caught with nothing to give them. Seeds can serve as subplots and tangents, or they can be expanded into complete stories.

Plotlines – Although designed as a detailed plotline for a complete story, these can easily be modified to fit as a session in a larger story or cycle.

Even though these story ideas are organized by pantheon, they are designed so that Scions of any group of Gods can take part – indeed, some of the most interesting stories arise when Scions of one faith have to mop up another pantheon's mess. However, you are encouraged to mix, match, modify and combine any or all of the ideas in a way that best suits your troupe and your plans.

SEEDS FOR ANY PANTHEON

• Two pantheons are on the brink of war because of the careful manipulations of a crafty titanspawn. Why take the fight to your enemies if you can get them to kill each other for you? The Gods have enough hubris and suspicion to make such a task all too easy – unless their Scions, who uncover the plan, find a way to stop it.

• A God is a little nervous about a visit to another pantheon's Overworld domain (or is possibly planning an eventual betrayal of his host's hospitality), so he sends his Scion to go scout out the territory first, possibly under false pretenses.

THE AESIR

SEEDS

• A character on watch encounters a Fenrir that vanishes when he calls for help. His fellows begin to suspect either his honesty or his wits. But the wolf is very real, waiting until the time when no one will come when the hero calls.

• As part of his tireless preparations for Ragnarok, Heimdall wants to test out a new security system he has built to guard an important location from titanspawn attack. He wants the player characters to attempt to break in, either by force or subterfuge. The location and the nature of the system (magical, technological or both) is up to you, but it should be virtually impregnable. For added complication, perhaps an actual group of titanspawn simultaneously attack, or worse, get *control* of the security system, turning this test into deadly reality.

• A frost giant has fallen in love with one of Freya's Scions and has abducted her. Freya asks the characters to perform a rescue mission. Play with the characters' expectations: perhaps the love is requited, and the two have staged the abduction in order to elope. Perhaps the giant feels genuine love and the Scion is a cruel, unsympathetic jerk. Regardless, there are few ways this seed can end in anything other than tragedy for someone, but perhaps *your* Scions are clever enough to find a way.

PLOTLINE: REYKJAVIK 101

Background: Reykjavik, capital of Iceland, is a city where it rains two hundred days a year, the young population finds weekly release on all-night-long pub crawls called rúntur and near-complete darkness reigns for several months at a stretch. Luckily, abundant geothermal power keeps Reykjavik well-lit, but all of subterranean drilling has pissed off a community of dwarves (**Scion: Hero**, p. 318) who have chosen to unleash havoc upon Reykjavik's citizens. What started out with vengeful pranks, however, has escalated beyond the dwarves' control when they accidentally unleash a ravenous Fear Pig, a titanspawn with a taste for human blood.

The Challenge: The characters are summoned to Iceland by Tyr, who has heard the dwarves' suit for justice and asks his Scion and her Band to investigate. The dwarves' pleas "forget" to mention the release of the Fear Pig. Alternatively, the Band may have another reason to be in Reykjavik – it is, after all, a popular vacation spot, and perhaps the heroes are merely trying to enjoy some downtime. In either case, they start to notice weird happenings during the rúntur – screams cut short, unexplained crashes and sobbing lovers insisting their partner was carried off by a monster. Some time during the rúntur, make sure the Band encounters drunken, depressed college student Hlynir Olaffson. Use him for comic value now, but later he comes to play a major role.

Pig Hunt: The Fear Pig is elusive prey; use the mechanics for Hogzilla (**Scion: Hero**, p. 312), plus an ability to inspire fear similar to the Serpent's Gaze Knack (**Scion: Hero**, pp. 133-134). The creature is large but intelligent and cowardly. Practicing hit and run tactics, it uses its ability to instill paralytic fear with its gaze and then drag victims underground for a snack. Sunlight is deadly to the creature, but sunlight is a rare commodity in Reykjavik during the winter. For powerful Bands, add additional Fear Pigs; maybe the dwarves unleashed a whole den.

Seeking the Hidden World: Many Icelanders believe in elves, dwarves and other hidden creatures. Sooner or later, the heroes will have to consult an expert, and Iceland's suburb of Harfnarfyordir has many. Gulla, a portly woman with a jolly countenance, will be happy to help. Unfortunately, she's a huckster: she will charge the heroes inordinate sums and lead them on one wild goose chase after another, insisting the whole time that she has special powers that let her communicate with entities the characters can't perceive. Meanwhile, the Fear Pig claims more lives.

Fortunately, there *is* a real medium around. Unfortunately, it's wasted college student Hlynir Olaffson. Arrange enough run-ins during the story that it eventually becomes obvious to the characters, if not Hlynir himself, that the boy has a genuine ability to detect Legendary creatures. It's up to the heroes to sober him up, convince him of his potential and get him to help.

Help from my Little Friends: With the aid of Hlynir, the characters should be able to locate the dwarves. While eager to share the tale of their own ill-treatment, the dwarves are more reluctant to admit their role in the Fear Pig's release. While ornery, they are not murderers, and if convinced of the extent of the horror the Fear Pig is wreaking, they will help the heroes track it down, even offering special weapons and items to assist in its slaying or recapture.

Dwarf Summit: Once the Fear Pig has been dealt with, the original problem remains: the Dwarves' complaint about human geothermal explorations. The Scions will have to arrange a dialogue between the bureaucrats at Iceland's national power company and a representative from the Dwarf Council. Whether you spend time role-playing out the intense negotiations or end the main thrust of the adventure when the pig-thwomping is done depends entirely on the preferences of you and your players.

AMATSUKAMI

SEEDS

• One of Izanami's children has gone missing, a reclusive young computer prodigy who had achieved international fame in the online gaming world, although he hadn't stepped out of his house in months. Has he been kidnapped by mortal rivals? Titanspawn? Servants of Izanami's husband, Izanagi? Maybe all three factions are fighting over him, and the Scions are caught in the middle.

• The Amatsukami saddle one of the player character Scions with another of their children (a Storyteller character) whom they have designated an "ambassador" to learn from Scions of other pantheons' Gods. The visitor is with them for the purposes of cultural exchange and learning; it soon becomes clear that this so-called diplomat's business seems to involve a lot of ordering everyone around and making all manner of arrogant, unreasonable demands. The Amatsukami character will have to walk a fine line between keeping the dignitary happy and keeping her friends from pounding the ambassador's face in, which would anger her divine parent to no end.

• A giant titanspawn (or two!) from Japanese mythology is storming through some city, the military rallies futile defenses and only the Scions can find the secret to slaying it. Play up all the conventions of the giant monster genre: brave reporters, annoyingly precocious kids, mass panic and massive destruction.

PLOTLINE: OLD WOUNDS, NEW WOUNDS

Background: For over a hundred years, dozens of "friendship societies" have existed between sister-cities in the United States and Japan. A high school band from the rural northern island of Hokkaido is visiting a small American town to play a joint concert with the school kids there. Mikaboshi has learned that one of the American students is, unknowingly, a Scion of Amaterasu. The Titan has dispatched a small army of shinobi (**Scion: Hero**, pp. 322-323) to assassinate him. To make matters worse, the older generation in town boasts several World War Two veterans who are uncomfortable with the Japanese visitors. Any attacks on American schoolkids could ignite the flames of mob violence.

The Challenge: Amaterasu is aware of the threat to her child, but because of her son's youth and gentleness has chosen not to reveal herself to him just yet. She makes it exceedingly clear to the Scions that, while they are to protect him, they are to shield him from any knowledge of his divine destiny until a time that she determines is auspicious. Blending into a small town is never easy – if you like, you can make it a little easier on your players by establishing at least one character's ties, through family or friends, to this community. Still, a gang of adults will arouse suspicion poking around a high school under any circumstances unless they create an excellent cover story.

Warm-Up: Creatures of shadow, the shinobi wait until nightfall to attack. Because this is the biggest event to hit town in ages, both high school bands are practicing well into the evening. Using their powers of stealth, Mikaboshi's minions will seek to spirit their target away unless the Scions are extremely watchful. In any kind of serious fight, they will flee at the last possible moment, leaving the Scions potentially holding smashed musical instruments

and having to explain themselves to irate school personnel and parents.

Drumbeats: After one or two shinobi attacks, the veterans in the town spring into action, coming out into the streets – sometimes in wheelchairs, many in uniform – to protest the Japanese visitors' presence. They stir up enough trouble that local drunken louts begin threatening the Japanese school kids; the Scions will have to act fast to prevent beatings and harassment of the visiting kids and their chaperones, all while repelling attempting shinobi assassinations. Note that the shinobi will put up a good fight, but are actually under orders *not* to kill their target just yet; Mikaboshi wants the town stirred up into a cauldron of hatred first.

On the March: Assuming the Scions can keep the town from exploding into violence, the joint band concert proceeds on schedule with a jubilantly musical march down Main Street. Protestors will be present. Here is where Mikaboshi plays his trump card: the shinobi attack in spectral fighter planes, strafing and performing kamikaze attacks on the town. The concert descends into chaos as the students run for cover and the protestors decide to take the defense of their town into their own hands, going after anyone who looks remotely Asian. In all of the confusion, the shinobi will make a genuine attempt on their target's life. The young boy – who looks Caucasian – will be making a heroic effort to save a Japanese girl from the mob. Whether Amaterasu chooses this moment to activate his powers or not, giving the Scions a new ally, is up to you.

Coda: There are any number of ways this adventure could end badly for some party present, but if the Scions handle the situation well, they will have the gratitude of the Japanese delegation, the town and Amaterasu herself. Truly skillful orators, combat leaders or diplomats among the Scions will even find a way to bring reconciliation between the protestors and the Japanese visitors.

ATZLANTI

SEEDS

- Huitzilopochtli assigns his Scion the mission of assassinating a brutal South or Central American dictator on his visit to the US (or, for a high powered group of Scions, maybe they will track down the dictator on his home soil). The tyrant is a scumbag, but getting away with an assassination is no easy task and Huitzilopochtli doesn't appreciate how severe the repercussions will be for his son or daughter. For a twist, perhaps the dictator is actually a decent man trying to do his best to reform his country from within, or is seen being kind and caring to his small children. Will that change the Scions' mind?
- A Zipcana (**Scion: Demigod**, p. 273) is stalking the city sewers. Finding even a giant in miles and miles of dark, twisty tunnels should be a claustrophobic, terrifying challenge. Remember the horror movie rule: show as little of the monster as possible, have victims disappear suddenly, and just when they think it's over, the worst happens.
- A single Atzlánti Scion is waging a one-demigod war against any Scion of another pantheon who he meets. Whether he has truly gone rogue or is acting on some directive from the Aztec Gods is unclear. When the Band tries to take him down, he will appeal to the loyalty of any Atzlánti among them, confide in those characters that he has evidence that another pantheon is planning a war on the Atzlánti, and urge them to join his a pre-emptive strike.

PLOTLINE: JA-CUZE!

Background: Hip-hop artist Alejandra Cruz, aka "Ja-Cuze," has finally caught her big break. Her internet videos have propelled her reputation beyond the *barrio* and into the mainstream, and she's due to sign a recording contract shortly. Her music is edgy and critical of politicians local and national, as one would expect from a daughter of Tezcatlipoca. Unfortunately, her lyrics also call out the leaders of Los Comemierdas, the local drug-dealing gang, for their crimes. They've killed three other promising vocal artists in the city, and Ja-Cuze looks like their likely next target.

No way, José: The players can enter the story in any of several ways – they could asked by a concerned mutual friend to intervene, or they could be fans of her music and catch rumor of the threat. If they try to offer their services to Cruz as a bodyguard, however, she flat out refuses. She tells them she's not scared, and will even reveal (if there are no prying mortal eyes around) that she's a Scion and can take care of herself. If any of the player characters is a singer or performance artist, however, she will warm up to him or her immediately and try to befriend them.

No ordinary hit: At the moment she convinces the player characters (or, if she never does, at the moment she's separated from them), a hit squad attacks – and no ordinary hit squad, either. They are supported by a camazotz (**Scion: Hero**, p. 258) and other undead creatures. Cruz has little choice but to accept the heroes' aid, and as a reward gives them backstage passes to see her next big show. She is especially generous to any artists among them, requesting a private meeting at a later point (it can have romantic connotations if appropriate).

Skeletons in the Closet: At some point backstage, or perhaps in Cruz's apartment, one or more players should stumble upon various clues that they

eventually have to assemble into the singer's dark secret: the bones and remains of those rival vocal artists supposedly killed by Los Comemierdas. Cruz herself has been behind the assassinations, draining both their blood and their talent. Once she has the artist player character alone, she will attempt to seduce or otherwise subdue him and perform the ritual. Make every effort to isolate the victim and hinder the other Scions' efforts to effect a rescue, including forcing them to deal with renewed gang or camazotz attacks, possibly including other undead South American monsters.

The Show Must Go On: Cruz should escape retribution long enough to make it to the concert, where by now she has advised security that the Scions are out to get her. Mortal thugs and police won't give the heroes much pause, but a fight at a packed public concert where security is heightened would be disastrous. Do they players negotiate with Los Comemierdas who themselves seem to have struck a deal with titanspawn (or, alternatively, with other Atzlánti elements who don't like the rapper) to take down Cruz? Do they try a subtle approach, sneaking in to deal with her backstage? Or in true hip-hop style, do they take the stage mid-concert and duel her with "free-styling," using rhyme to reveal her as a murderess in front of all her fans?

DODEKATHEON

SEEDS

• One of the two surviving Gorgons infiltrates a powerful corporation and has it begin marketing a line of deadly cosmetics that slowly turn their users into medusae (**Scion: Hero**, pp. 320-322). At first they are irresistible, but soon they become hungry for blood. Beloved Storyteller characters of the Scions (or maybe even one of the characters themselves) fall victim, and must be saved even as the Scions figure out a way to thwart the larger plan.

• Hermes needs a hand making deliveries. In exchange for the promise of rewards (or just intrigued by the chance to travel), the Scions will race from one end of the Earth to the next and beyond, ferrying all manner of bizarre cargoes and keeping them safe from ne'er do wells.

• A Scion of the Greek Gods is ordered to find a Scion of the Aztec, Japanese or Voodoo pantheon and pump them for information about their parents. If such a Scion is already in the hero's Band, the task may be easier, although some of the questions will be awkward and personal enough to raise even a friend's hackles. The more information the hero brings back, the more his

parent will present him with additional, even more intruding questions. The Scion may begin to wonder if provoking a conflagration isn't the true purpose of this mission.

PLOTLINE: MAN OF THE YEAR

Background: Creon was content to be the number two man in ancient Thebes, enjoying the benefits of rule without any responsibilities. Then Oedipus had to go and reveal his own incest, the queen killed herself and the two heirs to the throne managed to get Thebes into a civil war that led to an invasion and near-genocide. When the dust settled, Creon was left to pick up the pieces – could anyone blame him for instituting some tough laws withholding burial for traitors? Then his ungrateful niece Antigone had to go stir up rebellion, and by the end she, Creon's wife and Creon's son had all committed suicide. Political careers don't get more disastrous than Creon's. But Creon wants a second chance. The escape of the Titans gave him the chance to flee the Underworld and return to Earth, where he is making a run for governor of the state where the player characters live. He has had thousands of years to study political thought, and he has masterful leadership abilities. He has vision. This time, he is going to get his rightful place as head of state.

Dirty Campaigning: The Dodekatheon despise Thebes and Thebans, going way back to Cadmus' crimes, and Oedipus' actions hardly helped. Any players who are Scions of a Greek God will be enlisted to thwart Creon's aims. Blatantly killing a popular candidate for governor, though, wouldn't be a wise move. Not only will it put the heroes on the run from the law, but Creon has also hired some excellent security, both mortal and Titan-spawned, to keep him safe. They will have to resort to political and social means of opposition: muck-racking, slander, political sabotage and even campaigning for an opposing candidate (who may be dishonest, unelectable or even one of the player characters).

A king's ambition: Creon will be using the same tactics against any political opponents, including the Scions if they are public about their opposition. The Theban king is a master of political tricks and intrigues, and he has had no problem adapting to the modern age of television campaign ads, slogans and sound bites. Furthermore, he is charismatic and genuinely appealing to many voters, pushing a tough "law and order" stance on crime, security, borders and so on. Creon's weakness, as in ancient times, is his inability to compromise or see nuance. Unfortunately, today's political landscape hardly rewards nuance. Creon may well get elected, and from there on in he'll set his sights on nothing less than the presidency. Perhaps Creon is being used as a front-man by a powerful titanspawn. Every politician has his problematic allies, but Creon's hubris is such that, if convinced he is being used as a pawn, he may well ally with the player characters to fight his would-be puppet-master.

Wait until November: Defeating Creon on the political battlefield works well as a long-term plot, perhaps in the background as the Scions tackle other, more physical opponents. Storytellers can include all manner of cameos and roles for real-life politicians, campaign strategists and journalists. This adventure can be played for laughs or with deadly, John Grisham-style intrigue, but either way, the players should be in for a protracted battle in the political trenches.

LOA

SEEDS

• Two warring Bands of Scions pick a Loa Scion to be the mediator between them, counting on her objectivity. Unfortunately, the Scion receives instructions in no uncertain terms from her parent that the Loa have a keen interest in this conflict being resolved in a certain specific way. This interest, of course, must be kept secret – no easy feat in such a climate of tension and paranoia. Will the Scion abuse the trust that has been put in her, and if she does, can she get away with it?

• Former New Orleans Pelicans' pitcher Robert William "Bad-Eye Bill" Whittaker died bitter and unfulfilled in his dream to play in the major leagues. In the wake of the Titans' upheaval, "Bad-Eye" busted out of Ville Au Camp with the shade of fellow New Orleans Pelicans alum "Shoeless" Joe Jackson; the two have assembled hell's baseball team and are determined to redeem their memory by playing a winner-take all nine-innings against a suitable opponent. If they win, they not only get to live again, but claim the souls of the losers. Baron Samedi's soft spot for the old Southern League team (not to mention his own desire for entertainment) moves him to permit their little contest, but he taps the players, either as players or spectators, to ensure that Bad Eye's team doesn't emerge victorious. The Baron, as umpire, is very clear that the game must be proceed unmolested (i.e., the heroes can't just walk up to the pitcher's mound and pummel Bad-Eye into submission), but he allows the rules of the game to be "bent" here and there.

• Damballa has lost one of his favorite serpents, and commands the player characters to find and retrieve her. The snake in question is both sentient and magical, and has transformed herself into a human woman, intensely curious and determined to explore the mortal world. The characters will have their hands full tracking down the elusive shape-shifter, although her mischievous streak will tend to leave a trail of small catastrophes in her wake.

PLOTLINE: PLUMBING THE DEPTHS

Background: Hurricane Katrina burst nearly every levee in metro New Orleans, plunging most of the city underwater. The dark waters that claimed so many lives and spread so much disease also washed in all manner of Otherworldly menaces, including a young hydra (**Scion: Demigod**, pp. 262-263). Deadly and intelligent, the creature has been hiding beneath the waters during the slow cleanup of the region, claiming victims with hit-and-run tactics. Ogoun or another Loa God sends the Band in to find and destroy this monstrosity.

Where the ragged people go: The Hydra doesn't want a fight, at least not yet. It just wants to feed and grow, claiming prey that won't be missed. This means that sleuthing around police reports and other official channels won't get the players very far; they will need to make friends with the homeless and the dispossessed, or at the very least, with the social workers and relief volunteers who know them. The Scions will have to work hard to establish trust, possibly by contributing to relief efforts themselves. Once the player characters do get access to stories of missing people, they should be able to track the Hydra's trail back to its hiding spot.

Squid hunt: The Hydra has secreted itself in a difficult-to-access underwater lair full of hazardous obstacles. The precise spot is up to the Storyteller, but it should be both cavernous and eerie – the flooded-out wreckage of a factory, a waterlogged hotel, an abandoned school. The theme here is paranoia: throw all sorts of red-herring noises, blurred motion just outside of a player's field of vision and suspenseful actions that lead to false alarms. The darkness here should be supernatural, affecting bonus modifiers that grant enhanced perception. Separate the players whenever possible – force them to split up to cover more ground or send crashing debris to create barriers between them. Only when the tension hits boiling point should you reveal the monster itself.

Just when you thought it was over: The battle against the Hydra on its own turf will be difficult enough (unless the players find an effective way of luring it into a more favorable location, in which case the fight could be only slightly easier). For additional complications, the Hydra may have taken prisoners for late night snacks, forcing the player characters to pull their punches for fear of the victims' safety. If you want the adventure to end at the battle's conclusion, that's well and good, but perhaps the Hydra has benefactors. Canny land-developers barely waited until the rains stopped falling before moving in on New Orleans and buying up the best deserted real estate to sell later to wealthy investors. Maybe one of these tycoons has been using the Hydra as a way of clearing out former tenants, and will send minions to try and rescue his "pet." For another twist, a private security firm was also employed during the worst days of the Louisiana looting to restore order – often with shoot-first-and-ask-questions-later tactics. It wouldn't take much for them to mistake the Scions' actions and attack them; even a band of Scions might be challenged by a mercenary group better-equipped than the average US military unit. And of course, there's always the possibility of a second Hydra, maybe even the mother out to avenge its fallen spawn.

PESEDJET

SEEDS

• In ancient times, Thoth brought King Thamus the secret of writing, but the king was wise enough to ask about the dangers of this new technology as well as its benefits. Today's cutting-edge trendsetters are far less cautious. Thoth, for the benefit of mankind (as he sees it), introduces some new, high speed, vastly powerful computer networking software that the business world leaps to adopt. Unfortunately, unscrupulous individuals (mortal, Scion or titanspawn) seize on its potential for destruction or mass control. It's up to the players to stop them and determine if the new technology can be adapted for good or whether it needs to be destroyed.

• The Pesedjet decide that a favored Scion of their archrivals the Dodekatheon needs to be taken down a notch, and they call upon their own Scions to do the job. It's all the more complicated if both sets of Scions are members of the same Band.

• Bastet has developed an infatuation with a struggling professor of Egyptology at the local university who is a friend, relative or important contact of the players, and decides to shower him with all manner of gifts. Unfortunately the poor guy, desperate to pass his tenure review, has been having panic attacks trying to explain the mysterious giant cougars that have appeared in his dormitory housing, or why the priceless Pharaonic-era relics that have disappeared from the Museum of Fine Arts have inexplicably materialized in his office. The players must somehow iron out this situation, pleasing the Goddess while also keeping their friend from having his career destroyed, not to mention from getting smitten by a snubbed Bastet.

PLOTLINE: THE GOD WHO WOULD BE KING

Background: After 7,000 years, a rumor arises that an herb capable of restoring Osiris' ability to father children has been found in the World. Osiris had

long ago resigned himself to his brother Set's crime in robbing him of his genitals and thus his ability to be King of the Pesedjet, but now the long-dormant ambitions of kingship ignite in the normally gentle God. Osiris desperately commands his Scions to find this herb. Are the rumors true, or is this just more of Set's trickery? Osiris can't afford to pass up the chance, but, mindful of his earlier defeat and mutilation, he's not willing to risk himself. Promising unimaginable rewards, he sends his Scions and their Band out on a quest.

Too many heroes: Whoever leaked this rumor sure didn't work hard to keep a lid on it: everyone from rival Scion Bands (some of whom were also commissioned by Osiris himself) to titanspawn to unwitting mortal botanists and fortune-hunters are all on the case. You can string any number of encounters together at this stage of the game, involving research, following leads beating rivals to the punch and punching them out and taking the goods if they got to them first.

Out on limbs: Will the heroes even know the herb if they find it? If its location was obvious, someone would have stumbled upon it sometime in the last seven millennia. Maybe it's a lone sprout in the middle of an impenetrable rainforest. Maybe it's still in seed form, mixed in with millions of mundane copies or maybe the herb has been ingested and is lying in the stomach of a person, animal or titanspawn. Maybe the herb is a metaphor, and all of Osiris' Scions actually have a small piece of their father's regenerative abilities within them. Can (or will) they give up this piece of their Sire willingly, or is the stage set for a series of assassinations until one Scion is left holding all the goods?

Revelation: Is this herb the real deal, or has this whole quest been some cruel joke on the part of Set, a Titan or some other rival God? (Osiris himself is not so sadistic as to knowingly send his children on such a deadly wild goose chases). If it all turns out to be a sham, your players will feel cheated unless they either get some other cool reward, or at the very least get to beat the crap out of whoever fooled them. If the quest was a genuine one, and the heroes (or someone else) do return to Osiris the ability to father children, it will vastly upset the balance of power in the Pesedjet. Osiris only consented to be King of the Underworld because of his neutered state. Horus may offer the Scions even bigger rewards to "lose" or destroy Osiris' herb as a means of preserving his own power. The heroes may find themselves in the role of kingmaker, a powerful and dangerous position to have.

THE DEVAS

PART FIVE

Annie X scowled at the marble staircase as she sprinted towards it, sweat beading beneath a swathe of dyed purple hair and tattooed calves tensing with explosive energy. She vaulted through the Morley Estate as if trying to escape the past that surrounded her—every turn reeking of her father's exotic cigars and his rare whiskey.

The compulsion to destroy everything around her was tangible—driven by the pounding drums and screeching guitars of the latest indie punk band pumping into her earbuds. Her world was chaos and she usually embraced it. But in this case she had to ignore the pulsing veins and the visions Kali gifted her of torn paintings and burning tapestries. The Naga's Flask clinked against her rings and focused her thoughts on the grunting breaths rounding the hall behind her.

As Annie crested the top of the staircase, she swung her arm out to knock a priceless Chinese vase two stories to the cold, hard floor of the atrium below. It was one of her mother's favorites – just enough to sate her fire.

"No time for purging, no matter how cathartic, Exie!" yelled a voice from below.

Waiting for her at the door below was Sarojin, smiling as always and overjoyed to see her. He gave a quaint little bow as she sailed down the familiar steps and past the opulent fountain. As Annie neared him, he reached out to her as if to embrace her. Grasping tightly onto her tight black shirt, he hurled her out the door just as a hail of bullets thudded futilely into her shadow.

Damned titanspawn, she thought. Sometimes their timing seemed too perfect.

Her mind was racing. She squeezed the flask tightly and the cold, impersonal metal felt much heavier than it should.

"Amrita's still there, I hope," said Sarojin, his voice still cheery despite the shortness of breath during their all-out sprint.

In their Band's increasingly frequent skirmishes with the offspring of Vritra, they had decided to take a more proactive approach—heeding the advice of their divine parents and seeking out the targets of The Enveloper's unquenchable desire before it could consume them. From underwater grottos to holy shrines, they'd been able to starve him of the power he craved.

Annie was furious when she learned that her father had unknowingly received the Naga's Flask from a clueless antique dealer as a birthday present. His holding a few ounces of amrita, the divine drink, was blasphemy in Annie's book. While it afforded her the opportunity to knock out a few of the lecherous security guards he kept on staff and break into his vault (which she had always wanted to do), the presence of the flask in her father's collection also demanded that she return to the opulence she had worked so hard to avoid.

"I'll be damned if I die in this place," Annie growled furiously. They crossed the boundary of the rose garden as petals exploded all around them. Sarojin once more grabbed her and saved her from the deadly steel with a step to

the side. Whatever was following them seemed to be gaining. Black hooded sweatshirts obscured what looked to tiger heads and furry skin. Clawed fingers clutched blazing sub-machine guns.

"It would indeed be ironic for you to find your final peace here." Sarojin winked as they turned down a long hedge-row towards the edge of the property and their parked car.

Things got worse. The car wasn't where they left it, and Ademia wasn't patiently waiting inside for their getaway. Instead, she and the green Citroën C5 rental car were about thirty feet above ground in the grips of a giant snake. Its brown-black coils were slowly crushing the frame of the car, and it was occasionally striking at the roof with its massive fangs. Ademia was inside, the Scion of Artemis barely visible through the giant puncture holes in her car.

"I'll dispatch the cats and you take big ugly," offered Sarojin.

Annie nodded, wishing that Ademia wasn't inside and that they could have just escaped—allowing this beast free reign to destroy the Estate. It was a selfish and fleeting thought, and she quickly shook it away.

She reached to the waistband at the small of her back and pulled out a small metal rod. After reciting a few ancient words, the rod instantly extended and unfolded into a gleaming trident with white-hot flames licking along its length. Annie's head began to pound in anticipation—the same anger and resentment she brought to the stage at her concerts began to surge in her veins again. She tensed her muscles and scraped her tongue ring against the roof of her mouth as she leapt into battle.

THE DEVAS

The Devas are the Gods and Goddesses of the Indian subcontinent, a land rich with devotion for millennia. As true manifestations of the Hindu belief system, everything about them has an eternal air, though they are still cognizant of the fleeting nature of time. They esteem order and harmony while understanding that they are subject to the cycle of life. The Devas toil diligently to instill their ancient understanding of the world in the people and Scions that believe in them, for they know that Moksha, liberation from life's cycle, is not easily attained.

A VAST RELIGION

Many of the religions and pantheons we've presented in the **Scion** line are larger than we can present, and some are still actively worshipped today, but few are as vast or as variable as Hinduism, where the Devas are derived from. While we strove for an authentic note to this pantheon (and indeed all of our pantheons), we sometimes made decisions that are added dramatic punch over religious or mythological accuracy. If your favorite aspect of the Devas is missing or covered in a way you don't agree with, we encourage you to do your own research and modify this or any aspect of **Scion** to the needs of your cycle.

HISTORY

For the entirety of human history, the Ganges has known the tread of the Devas walking its shores. In truth they were around well before that, but it wasn't till men's footprints found purchase beside them that they made their presence known—emerging more completely into physical form.

The longevity of the Hindu pantheon is due to the nature of their existence. Many Devas have fallen, defeated in the bloodiest of battles. Others slowly drift into obscurity to be replaced in the cosmic order. The hideous, twisted Asuras, demons with perverted spirits, have beaten them into submission through ingenuity and martial prowess. The Devas themselves have perished and been reborn. Balance always wins out in the end, whether on an individual level or over the course of a millennia. The accumulation of the beliefs and philosophies of a thousand different sects and countless millions of people over such a long period of time serve as the basis for Hinduism. It is at the same time an internal whisper and an eternal truth.

The violent, sometimes woeful past of the Devas is inextricably paired with that of their nemesis, Vritra, the Titan of Drought. They have always known the deadly touch of The Great Thirst and the power that it wields. Paired throughout the eons, Vritra and the Devas battle for control across every part of existence—the oceans, time, art, love and the very hearts of mortals. It is obvious when Vritra has gained the upper hand: unprecedented sorrow rises from a famine, moral bankruptcy haunts those living near a dried riverbed, men and even Scions lack the will to act in an honorable manner and the land itself shrivels beneath their feet. Invaders and occupiers take crops and women, forever changing the culture the Devas worked so hard to protect.

When the Devas win out over Vritra, their people enjoy unprecedented years of prosperity. Devas and their people revel in a special intimacy after such battles, similar to soldiers returning to their families after a war. Many Scions were sired, raised, taught and trained during these times of relative peace.

While other pantheons grew self-absorbed and prideful in the centuries or millennia after thinking the Titans bested, the Devas in their eternal battle know better. They accept their role as foil to the all-consuming destructive force of the Titans and believe that there will never be an absolute victor in the conflict. At best, they can hope for personal liberation from the cycle of life, even if the cycle itself is immutable. For thousands of years their swords have not dealt a death blow to Vritra, and they have no reason to believe that they ever will.

When Vritra last held sway over the Devas, the British Raj held sway over their people. While not direct agents of Vritra, the occupation was a symptom of a war being waged in both the Underworld and Overworld. In a last-ditch effort, Parvati visited a few key mortals, inspiring them to rise against the Raj. She also sought to inspire the few Devas that had lost hope, after having been defeated so soundly by the Enveloper that they had begun to look towards their successors and children to take their place in battle.

The mortals gained independence, but not without extreme sacrifice. The Devas were emboldened by the actions of their followers, and Kali drew first blood with Ganesha's blessing behind her swing. Indra, who first defeated Vritra, dealt the final blow that ended the battle, as Yama's unerring gaze found a weak spot deep within the folds of Vritra's dried carcass.

Many of the Devas believe that Vritra will return with more regularity, as the end of a great cycle of time approaches. They estimate that the end of a final age of man is upon the world, the last epoch before the whole of creation—all realms together—undergo rebirth. Not unlike Ragnarök, many Devas accept that this time will come and do not fight against it. They point towards the return of other Titans as harbingers of their omen.

With increasing regularity they see his offspring walking the earth. The rakshasas, perversions of men mixed with Vritra's blood, continually vex the Devas' Scions with a demanding thirst for their ichor. Over a dozen Scions have recently been captured and brought to a horrible death in the maw of Vritra by these shape-shifting creatures. What had been a war between the Devas and Vritra has now grown to a larger conflict that requires the pantheon to forge new relationships with their ancient neighbors and come to their aid, as the titanspawn of previously foreign enemies come to the soil that the Devas call their own.

To restore balance, the Devas are siring Scions more frequently. They view these offspring as equal parts beloved children, future allies against the Titans and eventual replacements in the pantheon itself.

Relationships with Other Pantheons

The Devas have a huge advantage over the other pantheons of the World for one reason: Their religion is thriving – and *massive*. The Devas are masters of one of the major modern religions of the World, and its adherents number nearly one billion. Thus, while other pantheons may have pockets of followers sometimes reaching into the thousands of members, the Devas easily dwarf those numbers. For other pantheons, particularly ones that once ruled over most of the World (like the Dodakatheon and the Pesedjet), this is a bitter pill to swallow; mentioning that the Devas have been around for as long (if not longer) as any other pantheon just adds salt to the wound.

In many ways, the Devas are the top dogs of the Overworld. When Gods of the various pantheons meet, it's the Devas who can boast the loudest about their loyal subjects without resorting to tall tales and nostalgia. Granted, this pantheon also contains hundreds of Gods and demigods with devotees in every little village in India, but the growing numbers of the Devas merely adds to the majesty and power of the pantheon's bulk.

For these reasons, the other pantheons are jealous of the Devas. There is never any overt aggression toward the Devas, although brief skirmishes with the Celestial Bureaucracy and Dodaketheon have been known to occur. For the most part, the other pantheons fear and respect the Devas. Though Brahma and his company remain as cordial and polite to the other denizens of the World as possible, they certainly know they are the top dogs.

Of the other pantheons, the Devas have the best relationship with the Celestial Bureaucracy and the Amatsukami, mostly due to the proximity of their worshippers. The holy mountains of the Himalayas separate the spheres of the Celestial Bureaucracy and the Devas, and like any neighbors, the two groups get along best when the boundaries are firm. Once the fence is breached, however, the tensions start to mount and petty feuds ensue. The Devas admire the Amatsukami for their respect of nature and their philosophy of life, although the Devas prefer to escape the beauty of the World and instead reflect upon the inner self.

The Pesedject and the Dodakatheon have the coldest relationship with the Devas. To the Devas, these pantheons are the remnants of older and mightier families whose glory days are long behind them. While the Devas admire these pantheons for their spirit, they consider them to be too anachronistic to matter.

The Atzlánti could be placed within this grouping, but since the Devas never really had any encounters with them, the Aztec pantheon is viewed as a curious tribe of cannibals who talk big but produce few results. For this reason, the Atzlánti are the most openly hostile toward the Devas, but know better than to create powerful enemies.

The Aesir are an obnoxious, if occasionally entertaining, distraction for the Devas, viewed much like a house of rowdy neighbors. While they openly try to ignore them, the Devas know that they cannot avoid them entirely.

Finally, the Loa are a subject of utter fascination for the Devas. Because the Loa are one of the newest pantheons, the Devas have not fully recognized their existence, nor do they particularly care to welcome them into the enclave of the greater pantheons. But they do view the Voodoo Gods as a group to watch in the millennia to come, possibly as future allies or wards to take under their wing.

Enemies and Allies of the Pantheon

The foes of the Devas seem to grow by the day, but their eternal enemies are the Asuras, a race of titanspawn born from the perversion of Vritra's blood. Their karmic path runs opposite to the pantheon's adherence to order and harmony by sowing chaos and destruction. These demons, sometimes great beastly perversions slavering for blood and other times wise but sinister ascetics know only hatred for the Devas. They desire nothing more than to sap them of power and leave them for dead. Each of them shares blood with Vritra itself. Even the smallest amount of the corrupted black sludge running through the veins of a mortal or God condenses their thoughts and existence into one clear path—the destruction of the Devas and what they represent.

This is not to say the Asuras are mindless automatons. Monomaniacal, certainly, but they rival the Devas in terms of power, cleverness and trickery. One of their favorite tricks is to earn favors from the Devas by performing various austerities. The pantheon is forced to grant them power and Birthrights in honor of their self-discipline, however ill-conceived. This subtle shifting of power through sacrifice is usually a portent of a coming battle, but the Devas are powerless to deny the Asuras what they have earned, for the pantheon's philosophical adherence to the samsara is greater than their thoughts of self-preservation. The Asuras, in turn, pass along power to the rakshasas, who do their bidding in the mortal world.

THE DEVAS
THE HINDU GODS

Virtues: Endurance, Harmony, Intellect, Order

The Devas are the Gods usually associated with Hinduism and its lush, expansive history. They have existed from the beginning of time, and despite many deaths and reimaginings, they are arguably the oldest pantheon in existence. As one God perishes or fades away, another one rises to take his place.

Amongst their peers, they are the most widely worshipped in the modern world. This is a blessing and a curse—it allows them great sway in the mortal world, while at the same time setting them up as objects of great jealousy from rival pantheons. Scions of the Devas are particularly blessed: Hindu holy texts abound with stories of avatars, demigods and Godly reproduction, so the role of a Scion of this pantheon is almost commonplace. A Scion of the Devas may rise to the stature of a local God, with temple and worshippers, in a relatively short time. On the other hand, a mischievous God may decide to try the life of a Scion and live as an avatar in the World – much to the chagrin of his divine children or rival pantheons.

Further alienating themselves from the other Gods (as well as the vast majority of mortals who don't worship them) is their belief in Kali Yuga. A natural extension of the karmic cycle, the Devas believe that they are in the final part of the great cycle of ages known as the "Age of Kali" or the "age of vice." According to their collected knowledge, humanity is destined to degenerate throughout the current age and bring itself further and further from the Gods. Civilizations fall into contention, more heinous personal acts are committed and, at a base level, murder becomes commonplace.

Many of the Devas point to the return of the Titans as a harbinger of the final stages of the Kali Yuga. Much to the chagrin of the other pantheons, some of the Devas take an aloof approach to the destruction going on around them. Others might even feel it is their destiny to accelerate the end of the Kali Yuga and help the world be reborn once more, as it has since the beginning of time. This apocalyptic thinking makes other Gods more than a little nervous.

Despite all of their differences, the Devas do believe in a cosmic order. Everything for them goes in cycles on a universal, physical and personal level. They are inherently more accepting and open than other pantheons. This has, throughout history, been a thorn in their side as well—forcing them to cede some of their power to the most devious of the Asuras.

AGNI
AKA: AGAR

Description: Agni, the Sacred Fire, is one of the most ancient of the Devas. He bridges the gap between the Gods and their worshippers by providing a conduit for sacrifice—an all-consuming fire that cleanses as much as it purges. As the messenger of the Devas, he carries the prayers of mortals to divine ears and the word of the pantheon from immortal lips. Like the flame that he tends within each soul, Agni's life is "re-lit" each day, keeping him forever youthful. Seven fiery tongues dart out from between sharpened golden teeth surrounded by two young faces. Like the fire he represents, his skin is a deep red. Lightning crackles amidst his unkempt black hair as if dancing in a night sky. Often astride a chariot, he is more inspiring than terrifying.

In coordinating the efforts against the Titans, Agni is busier than ever. With each raging monster a thousand prayers are offered, and with each broken promise between pantheons a thousand trips must be made to make amends. His chariot snaps across the sky in a tireless journey to keep the world together and his fires burning brightly. When he takes a break from his work, it is not for long and it is with a distinct purpose—whether fathering Scions to help his efforts or acting upon something that requires a mortal touch. He has piloted a stealth bomber and been a Wall Street bike courier; he has been a pyrotechnics expert in Bollywood and a communications officer on a nuclear sub.

Scions of Agni are consummate facilitators. Masters of written and verbal communication, they often choose careers that marshal those around them into giving their all. They bring people together in a way that no one else can, whether through reason or inspiration. Some who follow the path of Agni are motivational speakers and

pharmaceutical salesmen. Others moonlight as amateur cryptologists and internet radio disc jockeys. Whatever the case, their expertise always outpaces their young age as Agni's fiery chariot outpaces the sun's light.

Associated Powers: Epic Dexterity, Epic Manipulation, Epic Wits, Fire, Psychopomp, Samsara, Sky

Abilities: Awareness, Command, Control, Empathy, Presence, Stealth

Rivals: Apollo, Huitzilopochtli, Izanami, Legba, Odin, Poseidon, Shiva

BRAHMA
AKA: ADI-KAVI, CHATUR-MUKHA, DHATRI, SANAT

Description: Brahma is the creator-God of the universe. In the primeval waters, Brahma laid a cosmic egg, the Hiranya-garbha, which divided itself into the heavens and the earth. Along with Shiva and Vishnu, Brahma forms the important triad representing the life cycle: Brahma is the creator, Vishnu's the preserver and Shiva is the destroyer. Together, every day consists of this cycle of birth, preservation, destruction and rebirth. All of eternity exists as a single day for Brahma, and once the day is over, the physical and spiritual world will be destroyed by Shiva, who will sit on the primeval waters until existence is created once more. Despite his importance in the Devas, Brahma is not a popular God among his followers. Many of the other Devas feel that Brahma's work is complete; Creation was formed and he can now rest easy. Brahma spends his time withdrawn from the World, usually occupied in creating it again every day. Other times, Brahma occupies his time with creating new Gods who spring forth from his mind (much to the dismay of his wife, Sarasvati, who stopped keeping track of them a long time ago). Brahma is red, with four faces that watch the World from all angles. He has four arms, usually holding his bow Parivita, a scepter, a bowl of water and some holy texts (which he is constantly reading).

In modern times, Brahma is the least likely to visit the World, often too concerned with his duties as creator to meddle with his own creation in the first place. When he does visit the World, he can be found on the streets of any major city sitting at a park bench, lost in his thoughts and feeding the ducks. Sometimes, Brahma is a farmer, tending his crops and livestock (especially chicken farms); other times he is tending a booth at a major festival, selling simple wares and trinkets with a smiling face.

The Scions of Brahma are thoughtful and quiet. They are usually inveterate loners who are silently intuitive and resourceful. Brahma's Scions tend to come from modest backgrounds and similarly low-key environments, but it is not unlikely for them to be successful (if reclusive) artists, filmmakers and poets: creative types like their father.

Associated Powers: Epic Perception, Epic Intelligence, Earth, Fertility, Magic, Mystery, Psychopomp, Sun

Abilities: Academics, Art, Craft, Empathy, Integrity, Science

Rivals: Shiva, Atum-Re, Baron Samedi, Huitzlopotchli, Susano-o, Thor

GANESHA
AKA: GANAPATI, GANESA, GAJA-ANANA

Description: The elephant-headed son of Shiva and Parvati is the most popular of the Devas. As the God of good luck and wisdom and the remover of obstacles, his name is invoked before any major undertaking, even before the names of Vishnu, Brahma or Shiva (a fact that particularly rankles his father). Ganesha is a hearty and robust figure, a survivor after many brushes with other deities (both Gods and demons). He received his elephant head shortly after birth, when a malevolent demon cursed the young Ganesha by wishing his head out of existence. Shiva replaced the head with the nearest one available: an elephant's. (Ganesha later broke one of the elephant tusks in a tussle with his father while protecting his mother's bathing ritual). Ganesha is also known for his scholarship, at which he excels above all the Gods. From his studies, he is often sought after as guru and advisor, using his vast knowledge to aid others in overcoming any problems. Ganesha has four arms, often seen holding his noose, conch, lotus and modaka (a sweet rice-ball, his favorite treat), while riding a giant rat, his preferred steed.

Ganesha is often seen in the mortal World, particularly at the many festivals devoted to him throughout the year among Hindu communities. When not celebrating himself, Ganesha can be found as anything from a successful life coach to a visiting scholar at a university, from a demolitions expert to a pastry chef.

The Scions of Ganesha are usually scholars of the same magnitude as their father: obsessive devotees of knowledge and information. Other Scions are generally those with a natural string of good luck, either born winners and horse-racing aficionados or young upstarts rising through the ranks of major corporations with ease.

Associated Powers: Animal, Earth, Fire, Magic, Mystery, Prophecy, Psychopomp, Epic Intelligence, Epic Perception

Abilities: Academics, Athletics, Awareness, Command, Fortitude, Science

Rivals: Surya; Legba, Queztlcoatl, Raiden, Sobek, Tyr

INDRA
AKA: PARJANYA, SAKRA, VRITRAHAN

Description: Cyclical change is inherent in the Devas' belief structure. Supernatural might wanes and waxes naturally even among the most powerful and eternal of the deities. Indra, the God of war and weather, was once King of the Gods and Lord of Heaven, his power unmatched as the greatest of all warriors. Foes fear his scourging lightning bolt, Vajra, and allies rejoice in his ability to revive those slain on the battlefield. With his complexion reddened by the Soma he imbibed, he bravely

entered battle against Vritra, the Titan of Drought. The powerful ichor-infused drink strengthened his power. From atop the great white elephant Airavata he carved open the Titan's belly in a killing blow, releasing all of the waters of the world back to their rightful place.

Indra's importance diminished with the rise of the Trimurti of Vishnu, Brahma, and Shiva. His strength, while still apparent to those who looked upon his massive form, had fallen into disuse before the Titans were again released. Until recently, overseeing a timely downpour of rain onto the Earth's soil was a more regular occurrence for him than leading forces into battle. With the return of his nemesis Vritra, Indra is once again preparing himself for war. The rest of the Devas hope that he will heed their pleas to join them after lying relatively dormant for centuries.

In preparation for another battle with Vritra, Indra has been very active reacquainting himself with the modern World and its tactics, as well as siring Scions where he can. He has been a storm chaser on the prairie and a lieutenant general in the USAF. Indra has worked on ever-smaller microchips as an electrical engineer, won several skeet-shooting national championships and been on the board of several major corporations.

Children of Indra are similarly disposed. They are boisterous, but resentful when they aren't utilized to their fullest. Like any proud offspring, they look back to the glorious times in their father's life and realize that he earned respect and followers through his magnificent displays of power. They seek to showcase their own power and tend to choose careers accordingly. Indra's Scions can be found as investment bankers and illegal street racers, as paramilitary specialists and formidable politicians.

Associated Powers: Epic Stamina, Epic Strength, Fertility, Samsara, Sky, War, Water

Abilities: Brawl, Control, Marksmanship, Medicine, Melee, Politics

Rivals: Brahma; Ares, Hachiman, Kalfu, Loki, Set, Tlazolteotl

Kali
aka: Durga, Bhavarathini, Kalarathri

Description: "The Black One" is truly terrifying. She is divinity distilled in a half-naked, four-armed figure loosely circled by a belt interwoven with human heads and a necklace made of human skulls. A third red eye strengthens her fearsome stare. In many ways she is cremation personified—a burning, insatiable psyche raging from inside an emaciated and blackened body that consumes all in her path by swinging both a sickle and a sword.

Kali is the Goddess of annihilation, the fiercest of the Devas and perhaps most feared amongst any pantheon fighting the Titans. While her prowess in battle is seldom tested, even by the most powerful demons, her divine power is derived from her sway over time itself. She, in her various incarnations throughout history, is the end of the cycle of karma. Kali brings death to all so that the cycle of life can continue. The terrible demon Raktabija once resisted all attempts to destroy it by springing forth a clone of itself from each drop of its blood that touched the ground. Kali bested the demon by sticking out her long and hungry tongue to drink up all of its blood. She then placed the remaining copies of Raktabija in her mouth and ate him.

Recently, Kali has been a citizen standing triumphantly atop a crumbling Berlin Wall with a worn pickaxe in hand. She's been a drug-fueled child soldier in Africa, a plastic recycling mogul and an arson expert. She is always a catalyst for change, whether it affects politics, social norms or even life itself.

The Scions of Kali always have a powerful personality born from a healthy respect for death and an unusual disregard for their own bodies. Whether that disregard is a personality-changing addiction, purposeful neglect or a willingness to jump in harm's way, it is always present. They can be found as the strangely charismatic leaders of underground punk bands, efficient and enthusiastic pest control agents or as deep-jungle revolutionaries.

Associated Powers: Chaos, Darkness, Death, Epic Appearance, Epic Strength, Samsara, War

Abilities: Awareness, Brawl, Fortitude, Melee, Occult, Presence

Rivals: Lakshmi; Damballa, Hachiman, Hephaestus, Horus, Odin, Quetzlcoatl

Lakshmi
aka: Lola, Indira, Sri, Padma

Description: Lakshmi is the Goddess of good fortune and beauty, and is a daughter of the primordial waters. Lakshmi was originally born to a maharishi—one of the great seers in the celestial heavens—who cursed all celestial beings (his daughter included). Hiding from his wrath in the primeval waters before creation, Lakshmi was reborn to the World on a lotus flower, her divine beauty in full view to all of creation. Because of this second birthing, Lakshmi is viewed as a Goddess who can bestow good luck and fortune upon others. This may be one of the reasons that Vishnu chose her as his wife. For every incarnation of Vishnu in the World, from Rama to Krishna, Lakshmi has appeared at his side as his beloved. In the eternity of their divine nature, Vishnu and his divine wife are inseparable as lovers and companions in whatever form they currently hold. Lakshmi is a very beautiful Goddess with four hands and a shining visage, usually with a lotus flower in one hand while the other holds the hand of her beloved, Vishnu.

In modern times, Lakshmi can be found whenever Vishnu is in the World in one of his incarnations. But she is more than a trophy wife. Oftentimes, Lakshmi is more outgoing in the World than her husband, whether she is an attractive concierge for exclusive resorts, hostess of a television game show or an heiress endowing her fortune to charitable foundations.

HIGH FIDELITY

Scion is based on the premise of promiscuous Gods. The stories are full of divine beings cheating on their significant others with beautiful mortals, animals, trolls or even their siblings. That is all well and good: There wouldn't be this game without the Gods screwing around with others. But what happens when you encounter Gods who are actually *faithful* to their divine partners? Doesn't that run contrary to the very premise of this game? As Storyteller, how do you explain a Scion of Lakshmi or Vishnu?

There are a number of possible explanations you can use without going against the eternal love of Vishnu and Lakshmi or the basis of **Scion**:

Randy avatars: Bring together two Gods in Avatar form, add nine months of pregnancy, sprinkle in a pinch of the divine and voila! True, this might only work if one of the two were in their less-Legendary form, but it's not unheard of. Vishnu is especially well-known for his adventures in the World, and the God with the weaker Avatar might decide who the Scion's patron truly is. Of course, you could always have them choose their parents….

Un-divine child: One God plus one God does not always equal another God. Sometimes the child of two divine parents turns out to be mortal. What do you about that? Well, the child's parents might decide it is best for the baby to grow up with normal parents, and whoever has time for the Visitation can claim dibs on the divine parentage. Don't forget the Adopted Parent option either: There is no greater story arc for a Scion than a quest to determine his true heritage. And what could stop other Gods from swooping in and claiming the orphaned Scion as her own?

Moment of weakness: Even deities have weak moments, and a divine marriage can have rocky spots. When a husband and wife are falling on hard times, adulterous relationships may follow. A Scion could be a result of a one-night stand on a business trip to the World. It's not the Scion's fault he was the result of a moment of weakness, but he will probably need all the help he can get once he meets his half-sister on a special mission from an angry wife.

Scions of Lakshmi, though rare, nevertheless have a tendency of sharing her magnanimous personality and outgoing nature. Generally coming from wealthier backgrounds, they are very forthright and generous people, giving their time to aid those less fortunate than themselves. Lakshmi's Scions are beautiful people not just from the outside, but from the inside as well, and their kind nature overwhelms their personality, almost to a fault.

Associated Powers: Epic Appearance, Fertility, Guardian, Health, Mystery, Moon, Epic Perception, Psychopomp, Water

Abilities: Awareness, Empathy, Integrity, Politics, Presence, Thrown

Rivals: Parvati; Aphrodite, Freya, Hachiman, Kalfu, Set, Tlazolteotl

PARVATI
AKA: SHAKTI, SATI

Description: Parvati exists as the ultimate incarnation of shakti, the concept of feminine energy that encompasses all aspects of the feminine Devas. From Kali's furious annihilation to Sarasvati's productive inspiration, shakti exists as the benevolent and malicious faces of the feminine ideal. Parvati wields it with the utmost skill.

Shiva's daring wife and Ganesha's mother, Parvati has used her skill at adaptation to further her agenda for millennia. Originally dark-skinned, she underwent a thousand penances to earn a favor from her beloved husband Shiva in order to gain a power great enough to change her own complexion to light. She is an expert mediator and a devoted spouse, an unimpeachable ascetic and an active partner in love. Parvati is always bathed in pure white, symbolizing her flawless knowledge. She carries a blue lotus at all times, which she ponders with her three eyes.

In modern times she is reluctant to birth Scions of her own, only doing so at the behest of Shiva. She complements all that she encounters and delights in that role. She's been a calming doctor and an elementary teacher, a deft consultant and a soccer captain. Her beautiful form wafts through the world effortlessly—she gets her way without you ever doubting her intentions.

What few Scions she has actively rejoice in the generative energy of their personality. They thrive in a cooperative setting as subtle manipulators of their peers who are equally eager to self-sacrifice. They are soft-spoken spiritual leaders and the first firemen into an inferno. They work tirelessly in non-profit housing advocacy groups and eagerly take up the banner of the death-row public defender. Parvati's children tend to see the truth behind a mortal's hidden intention and they exercise an admirable ability to forgive them for it.

Associated Powers: Epic Charisma, Epic Manipulation, Epic Wits, Guardian, Health, Magic, Samsara,

Abilities: Craft, Empathy, Medicine, Occult, Presence, Survival

Rivals: Visnu; Apollo, Damballa, Hephaestus, Isis, Miclántecuhtli

SARASVATI
AKA: SARASWATI, MAHA SARASWATI

Description: The daughter and wife of Brahma, Sarasvati is worshipped in virtually every Hindu town. However, her inspiration is sought on a much larger scale by every desperate artist, developing intellect and person feeling even the faintest hint of an epiphany in their everyday life. She is the prolific muse of the Devas. Wise and creative, Sarasvati's energy extends deep within the veins of painters, actors and musicians. She is often depicting as a flowing river—a manifestation of her ability to endlessly supply society with the most powerful and essential elements of knowledge and inspiration.

Saraswati is a lithe, gorgeous woman often appearing with flawless pearl-tinted skin, finely-combed jet black hair and dressed in the purest white clothes. As a Goddess with the knowledge and experience of the culmination of reality, she exudes a confidence born of the fullest proficiency and understanding. Her demeanor inspires those that witness her presence even more than viewing her beautiful form does. For millennia she has provided the outlets for humanity's most noble and selfish pursuits.

These days Sarasvati appears as an Emmy-winning indie actress, a librarian active in her community and a well-renowned food critic. She fills positions where she is needed most, when creativity has fallen to uninspired sequels, recycled plots and borrowed metaphor. She revels in being able to witness the fruition of the inspiration she has planted in the hearts of those she has touched.

Sarasvati's Scions are bursting with creativity and delight in their ability to pass it along. They are thoughtful and observant, regularly recognizing patterns and phenomena in the world that others would pay dearly to know. Her children spend their days as powerful fiction editors and high-fashion models. They moonlight as spoken word artists and sensuous go-go dancers.

Associated Powers: Epic Appearance, Epic Intelligence, Fertility, Health, Prophecy, Samsara, Water

Abilities: Academics, Art, Awareness, Craft, Medicine, Science

Rivals: Parvati; Ares, Loki, Sobek, Tezcatlipoca, Tlaloc

SHIVA

AKA: Shiva, Sada-Shiva, Chandra-Sekhara, Nataraja

Description: A part of the major triad of the Devas, Shiva is known as the destroyer God, the final arbiter of destiny. While Brahma is the creator and Vishnu is the protector, Shiva is the destroyer, representing the uncertainty and dread that accompanies the unknown. A fearsome force, Shiva is the God who will finally destroy the World and sit upon the remnants in the primordial waters until that time when it is formed again. Shiva is also a contemplative God, known as much for his mystical nature as his destructive one. He, along with his son Ganesha, is the chief God for yogic practices, an ascetic who goes for years without sustenance in order to better know the World through pain and suffering. When Shiva is not enthralled in his asceticism, he is the Nataraja, the cosmic lord of the dance. Through his motions comes the order of the universe, and while his dancing is alternately beautiful and fearful, it captivates all audiences, mortal and divine alike.

Shiva is a terrifying presence, unnaturally ugly and terrible in appearance. Horrible, evil creatures follow him while he is in the World, from goblins and ghosts to serpents and savage souls. With five heads and four arms, Shiva is an intimidating force, his upper two arms usually holding his war-drum and the ongoing fire of the World, while his lower two arms are empty. Shiva has a third eye in the middle of his forehead (when he chooses to have but one head), which he formed to save creation from darkness. In his divine form, Shiva always has the torana around him, an arch of flames engulfing his body.

When Shiva visits the World, bad things usually follow. He is known to haunt graveyards and sacred places with his fearsome followers in tow. But when Shiva is feeling particularly feisty, he can be found at the hottest nightclubs, tearing up the dance floor while his posse causes trouble at the bar. Fights are common wherever he goes, and he is always the last one standing. However, when Shiva is not looking for trouble (a rare occasion), he takes to the wilderness to complete his ascetic journeys. Sometimes, as a part of his ascetic quest, Shiva works part-time teaching yoga to enterprising students around the world. Usually, however, this is a ruse: As his wife Parvati often suspects, he is really out siring more Scions with his more impressive students.

Scions of Shiva are as ill-tempered and terrible as their father, usually bearing harsh grudges and prone to violent tantrums. They are never attractive people, but Shiva's children do have a fierce drive and fortitude that others

pick up on: They are natural leaders and trail-blazers, often with large groups of followers at their heels. But these Scions are also just as likely to retreat from those around them and live in seclusion for large periods of time. With this dual personality, many Scions of Shiva share the common symptoms of manic depression.

Associated Powers: Chaos, Fire, Darkness, Mystery, Magic, War, Epic Stamina, Epic Dexterity, Epic Appearance

Abilities: Athletics, Brawl, Command, Fortitude, Melee, Survival

Rivals: Brahma; Anubis, Baldur, Izanagi, Ogoun, Poseidon, Xipe Totec

SURYA
AKA: SHURIAS, PUSHAN, VIVASVAT

Description: The sun God of the Devas, Surya is one of the oldest Gods of the pantheon. Practically dwarf-like in stature, Surya has copper skin and red eyes. He rides in the sky on his chariot, drawn by a seven-headed horse and steered by the Asvina, twin brothers who represent dawn and twilight. To those loyal to him, Surya is generous and open; to those who betray him who he feels are disloyal (which is most people, Gods and mortals alike), Surya is malevolent and cruel, his shining visage bearing down upon them with spite and enmity. At his best and most benevolent, the sun God is an enlightening presence for his followers. Through stimulation and instigation, he expects the best out of those dearest to them, and he will often inspire people to reach their highest potential. When they do not, they usually feel the full impact of his wrath. Surya has fathered many of the epic heroes of Hindu legend, including Karna and Sugriva (the monkey king). He does not mention the many others who he perceives as failures.

Surya makes many visits to the World in modern times, usually as some form of animal, enjoying the freedom of the wilderness. Surya prefers to spend his time in the deserts around the World, basking in his own glory at the height of his power. He is also known to be a referee for many sporting events, particularly cricket and soccer, with a tendency to draw unnecessary attention to his antics and outbursts against players while drawing heavy fines for questionable motives in many of his calls.

Surya's Scions are as feisty and particular as their father. Noble and educated by nature, they expect nothing but the best from themselves and others in their vicinity; if this potential is not realized, the full brunt of their fury is quick to follow. In a way, these Scions share the personality of

Surya perfectly: constantly feeling slighted and with a sharp edge to their spite, but only for those who they feel deserve it (which includes most people). When not dwelling on issues with their parents, Surya's Scions are bright and pleasant people and are loyal to their friends and loved ones (but unpleasant and begrudging if they feel betrayed).

Associated Powers: Animal, Chaos, Fire, Health, Sun, Prophecy, Mystery, Epic Strength, Epic Manipulation

Abilities: Awareness, Brawl, Investigation, Marksmanship, Occult, Thrown

Rivals: Yama; Apollo, Atum-Re, Heimdall, Shango, Tsuki-Yomi

VISHNU

AKA: VISNU, NARAYANA, KESAVA, PUNDARIKAKSHA

Description: The third of the major triad, Vishnu is known as the Protector or Preserver of Creation. While Brahma is the originator and Shiva the destroyer, Vishnu represents all the good and benevolent forces in the universe. He is commonly known as the Narayana, or ever-present and pervasive spirit of the World, and sits on a lotus on the primordial waters while maintaining the steady flow of its waters. For many Hindus, Vishnu is a God of paramount importance, the chief deity of the pantheon. Yet, he is also known as the humblest of Gods, often serving his role as protector without fanfare or notice. Vishnu is constantly devoted to his wife, Lakshmi, and is rarely seen without her. Bearing a dark blue complexion with four arms and a star shape on his breast, Vishnu has a regal presence about him. Around his neck he wears the holy gem Kaustubha, and his four arms usually wield the weapons with which he defends the World.

Vishnu is unique among Gods in that his visits to the World are well known among mortals. Throughout history, Vishnu has visited the World as one of his avatars in order to defend creation against some malevolent force, whether it is the demon king Bali or the forces of unbelief in the Gods. Among his many incarnations, three are famous among mortals: Rama (the hero of epics), Krishna (his most important avatar) and Buddha (founder of Buddhism). Legends state that Vishnu will make one more grand appearance to the World as Kalki, riding a white horse; once this visit occurs, the world will be destroyed by Shiva until the Age of Darkness ends. Many mortals take this to mean that Vishnu has not wandered the World for ages: This is not true. Vishnu spends a lot of time among the mortals, only with a markedly less celebrated attendance. He prefers to spend his time among the poor and outcast, as either a public defender or community leader. He is

known to run food banks and halfway houses, as well as militias and guerilla groups in third world countries.

Scions of Vishnu are overwhelmingly noble and beneficent. They devote their energies to defending others and protectors their loved ones. It is not uncommon for a Scion of Vishnu to go to great lengths (bordering on obsession) to help those in need. They are almost universally wise and beautiful as well, the paragon of virtue and modesty and successful, righteous living. For this reason, Scions of other Devas have a tendency to be jealous of Vishnu's Scions, especially after the bounty of gifts bestowed upon his children during their first Visitation.

Associated Powers: Animal, Fertility, Guardian, Health, Magic, Psychopomp, Water, Epic Perception, Epic Strength, Epic Charisma, Epic Intelligence

Abilities: Animal Ken (eagle), Awareness, Command, Empathy, Presence, Stealth

Rivals: Kali, Shiva; Amaterasu, Dionysus, Erzulie, Geb, Loki, Tezcatlipoca Zeus

Yama
aka: Dharmaraja

Description: Yama's power is born from an ancient, unenviable position: He was the first mortal to die. During his transition to death, he trudged his way to the immortal realms and laid his claim there to become the Lord of the Dead. Upon establishing himself as the watcher over an ever-increasing population, he took on the burden of assessing karma itself. For each living being he keeps exact records of their actions so that when they reach life's end, they can be assigned to hell or heaven accordingly.

His gaze is unerring, his understanding unfathomable. His skin is tinted green and his body is draped with red clothes. He judges all life: Those that would attempt to escape his view, either holding on to a thread of life or ultimate ashamed of their actions, hear the thundering gallop of his buffalo mount and feel the inevitable cinch of the rope he uses to extract the soul of those that would foolishly try to avoid their fate.

Yama lacks humor altogether. He has fathered Scions only reluctantly, at the request of Shiva and Vishnu. On the rare occasions that he manifests apart from the realms of the Devas, he has been a county coroner and career bureaucrat, a stock analyst and a tenement superintendent.

His Scions are likewise taciturn, serious and dour. They pick professions that allow them to disassociate with their yearning empathy and treat life as a series of stark comparisons. They abhor venturing into any morally gray area. Yama's sons have been hard-working principals and toll-booth operators, big-city bartenders and tow-truck drivers. They've seen it all and are unimpressed by the passage of life around them—somehow knowing the ultimate truth without addressing its implications for their own lives.

Associated Powers: Death, Earth, Epic Stamina, Epic Intelligence, Justice, Psychopomp, Samsara,

Abilities: Animal Ken, Control, Integrity, Occult, Stealth, Survival

Rivals: Indra; Baron Samedi, Hera, Osiris, Raiden, Tlazoltéotl

Pantheon Purview: Samsara

Even the Gods are subject to Fate's whims and fancies; no being can ignore that fact. The powerful deities of the divine pantheons cannot escape Fate's fabric as it entwines their Legend in the goings-on of the World. The Devas are no exception: Fate's fingers tug at the lives of the Hindu Gods just as much (if not more so) than those of mortals. Every Deva feels Fate's ever-present grasp holding her down to the material and tethering the spirit to the cold, miserable reality of the World. For the Devas, there is only one way to deal with this spiritual imprisonment: Break the chains and free yourself from Fate's grasp. Samsara represents the struggle against Fate's binding. Roughly translated from Sanskrit as a "journey" or "wandering," it represents the struggle for individuals against the eminent and ubiquitous forces surrounding the World, those powers even greater than the Gods and Titans. Each power is a manipulation of the influence of Fate's interaction with the World, from the simplest abstraction to the overarching themes and mysteries of creation; from cause-and-effect to death and reincarnation. Samsara is a cycle, a process never-ending; only by overcoming fate and denying the realm of the senses can one be one with Fate.

Because at its base Samsara deals with Fate and Fate's influence upon the World, it shares many qualities with the Magic Purview. In a way, Samsara is the Devas' own particular brand of magic, and as such the purview carries some of the same effects of the Magic purview. For one, any target of a Samsara Boon, as well as any mortal who bears witness to a Boon taking effect, is immediately Fatebound to the Samsara user. However, sacrifices do not grant the same bonuses that they do for the Magic Purview (**Scion: Hero,** p. 154). Rather, Samsara Boons require the use of either a sacred expression ("om") or a yogic position in order to function. If the Deva is unable to move or speak for the proper Boon, he cannot use it. Finally, the Boons of the Samsara Purview may be purchased as Magic spells by any Deva. The experience cost for a Samsara Boon as a Magic spell is twice its normal cost.

Kriya (Samsara •)

Dice Pool: Legend

Cost: None

Fate's influence rests entirely with action. In Fate's intricate web, each strand represents the connecting force between two individuals, the strand's thickness dependent on the strength of the interaction. Kriya represents this most primal aspect. The use of this Boon allows a Scion to manipulate one particular strand of Fate by briefly halting its creation. A Scion may use this

power reflexively to reroll a failed action a number of times. Once they fail an action, the Scion may reflexively roll a dice pool equal to their Legend rating. For every two successes accrued, they may reroll that action again one more time (so four successes would allow two rerolls). Sacrificing a point of Legend to reroll an action cannot be used in conjunction with this Boon.

Karma (Samsara ••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 Legend (+ 1 Willpower)

While the common Western perception of karma is the give-and-take balance between action and response, the Hindu belief in karma is much more nuanced and mystical. Karma is more than the idea of "do goods things and good things are done to you"; rather, karma represents the totality of one's action in the great fabric of the World, a delicate maneuvering through the mysteries of Fate. One can never know the complete effect of one's deeds upon the rest of creation, yet the fated journey of the soul is driven through the choices made and missed.

Using this power, however, can lead a Scion to better understand the primal forces surrounding her actions. Whenever the Storyteller makes a roll in private, be it to determine the effects of Fatebinding, the use of a titanspawn's power or to check the effectiveness of a hero's persuasion powers on a mortal, the Scion may learn the inner workings of Fate's hand. By spending a point of Legend, the Scion's player may ask the Storyteller about the reason for a particular roll. The Storyteller must tell the player the reason for the roll; he does not, however, have to tell the rest of the troupe. This represents the insight gained from the Scion's keen observance of Fate. If the player spends an additional point of Willpower, he may learn the outcome of the Storyteller's roll.

Pratyave (Samsara •••)

Dice Pool: Varies

Cost: 1 Legend + 1 Willpower

For every action, there is a reaction. The basic law of physics is also an immutable truth in regards to Fate. The entirety of existence is a give-and-take struggle between the actions of individuals and the subsequent reactions doled out from Fate. A Scion with this power has learned to harness Fate's reflexes to her advantage. When another person successfully performs a supernatural action against her, the Scion may spend a point of Legend and a temporary point of Willpower to perform the same action against her opposition. Whatever the action is, the Scion performs the same action that her target executed against herself regardless of whether or not the Scion would normally be able to perform that action. For example, if a rival Scion uses his Serpent's Gaze Knack against the Deva, this Boon will return the favor, causing the rival Scion's eyes to be locked with the Deva. The Pratyave Boon is only effective against beings with a lower Legend rating. All targets must be valid for the Scion for this Boon to be effective. If a dice roll occurs, the Scion uses the same dice pool as the original actor, but using his own dots in Attributes, Abilities and the like.

Tantra (Samsara ••••)

Dice Pool: Perception + Samsara + Legend

Cost: 1 Willpower

When a demigod enters into an intense meditative state, he focuses on the divine aspects of his pantheon in order to sharpen his insight on the World around him. By concentrating on his divine parent's form, from the smallest detail of their physical presence to the larger whole of his parent's godly existence, the primal forces controlling existence create an aura of energy around the demigod that stimulates the surrounding area. To activate this Boon, the demigod must stay prone for at least one round in a yogic position without breaking concentration. Once a round is complete, the demigod's player rolls (Perception + Samsara + Legend) and chooses up to three targets within (Legend x 10) feet. As long as these targets remain within this range, they gain a DV bonus equal to the number of successes from the activation roll divided between the targets, at the discretion of the activating demigod. The demigod need not maintain his yogic position after the activation roll. The effect lasts for the rest of the scene.

Bhava (Samsara •••••)

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Craft + Legend

Cost: 4 Legend

According to legend, all creation begins with thought; namely, the thoughts of Brahma intertwined with atman, the universal spirit. Each day, Brahma births new Gods and demigods with his thoughts, creating life where none existed before and birthing new ideas, new traditions and new options in the World. Any demigod of the Devas may mimic this action, albeit in a more subdued way. By focusing her mind for a tick, the demigod may create an object in her hands.

The demigod's player must first announce the object she is intending to create. There are a few criteria for these created objects, however. First, the object must fit in the hands of the demigod. Second, it cannot be a magical item. Third, it cannot be a sentient thing or living organism. It may exceed no more than one of those dimensions. When the object is created, it appears in the Scion's hands and lasts for one day. Depending on the number of successes achieved, the purity and essence of the object may vary. If there are only a few threshold successes, then the created item exists, albeit in a very crude form. For example, if a Scion attempted to create a hammer and garnered no threshold successes, then the object formed would be a rusty piece of metal with a torn rubber handle. It has the same function and shape as a hammer, albeit a barely recognizable one. More successes would have allowed for a shinier hammer (or even a name-brand one).

After the player spends the requisite Legend and rolls her character's (Manipulation + Craft + Legend), counting the number of successes achieved against a target number of successes. Any successes over the threshold allows for the object to be honed into a more realistic size, shape or appearance. The chart below gives some sample difficulties for various created objects:

Object	Difficulty
Basic tool	2
Complex tool	3
Multiple parts	4
Firearm	5
Chemicals	6
Heavier than Scion	+1 per multiple of Scion's weight
Taller/Wider/ Deeper than Scion	+1 per multiple of Scion's dimension
Specificity	Storyteller's discretion

Avidya (Samsara ••••• •)

Dice Pool: Wits + Empathy vs. Intelligence + Occult

Cost: 4 Legend + 1 Willpower

By virtue of living in the material World, we are stuck in an existence bound not only by Fate, but also by ignorance. The cycle of samsara is a reminder of this fact: Because we exist, we are unaware of the sublime knowledge that awaits us once we remove ourselves from the Fated life. The Sanskrit word for this delusion is avidya, which also means ignorance. The demigod can wield this ignorance to his advantage, forcing another being to fully exploit their ignorance of the sublime and divine.

To use this power, the demigod must first make eye contact with her intended target. Once eye contact is established, the demigod must utter her sacred expression loud enough for her target to hear her. The target does not need to understand the sacred expression nor have the intelligence to recognize it; all they have to do is hear it. Consequently, if a demigod cannot speak or project her voice loud enough for the target to hear, this power does work. Once the target hears the sacred expression, the demigod's player rolls (Wits + Empathy) against the target's (Intelligence + Occult). If the demigod achieves more successes, the target forgets (or, more accurately, becomes ignorant of) one his supernatural abilities. In essence, the demigod has channeled Fate to force the target to lose knowledge of a Boon, Knack, supernatural ability or spell for one scene. The lost power is subject to the demigod's discretion, but the demigod must know or suspect that her target has that ability. If the target garners more successes than the demigod, Fate punishes the demigod for her insolent attempt to control its mysteries, and the demigod loses access to Avidya for a day. This Boon may not be used against a being with higher Legend than the demigod.

Mahaprasthana (Samsara ••••• ••)

Dice Pool: Perception + Empathy

Cost: 10 Legend

Death is not an obstacle to the followers of the Devas. Rather than being an endpoint in life's straight path, the Hindus feel that death is rather a single stop in the overall journey of the soul. To die is but one leg of a longer journey: a milestone, but certainly not an ending. This is not to say that death is an unimportant event; no demigod approaches the end of their physical body and the uncertainty of rebirth without a little hesitation. Sometimes, it's just a little inconveniently timed, as well. Marana aids in this predicament by staving off the forces of death in the Devas' vicinity, at least temporarily.

To activate this power, the demigod must stay in her yogic position for five minutes, concentrating on the meaning of death. The player spends 10 points of Legend and rolls her (Perception + Empathy) *without* counting successes from Epic Perception. The number of successes gained on this roll equals the area in which death cannot occur around the Scion for one day. Consult the following table for a guide on the area of effect:

# of Successes	Area of Effect
1-2	City block
3-4	City neighborhood
5	Entire city
6+	Metropolitan area

The aura created by this power affects all physical, spiritual and manifested things. If caught in the aura, no being can die as a result of wounds, poison, disease, natural causes, etc. Instead, these beings are stuck in stasis at the Incapacitated level until they are either healed or removed from the Deva aura. The aura follows the Scion in her movements, so if a being wishes to remain un-dead, it must somehow follow the demigod's movements.

While this power works perfectly to save a fellow Scion from the ravishes of death, it also affects enemies and mortals alike. All mortals and titanspawn whose deaths were delayed by this power become immediately Fatebound to the Deva. This power lasts for exactly one day and can only be deactivated by a successful (Perception + Empathy) roll – again without counting Epic Perception successes. This power has no effect in the Underworld or Godrealm.

Maya (Samsara ••••• •••)

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Presence

Cost: 15 Legend

According to Hindu belief, existence is ultimately stuck in the concept of maya, the illusion that the World and its material properties exist at all. The

spirit and energy that binds the World together is hidden beneath this concept. Every life, death and rebirth of an individual in some way acknowledges this truth, as Fate muddles the spiritual in a shiny veneer of distractions and sensual pleasures. Every spin through samsara's cycle is inured with this illusion. Yet the Devas have a way of using Fate's perpetually rotating trick to their advantage. Unlike the Illusion Purview (detailed in **Scion: Ragnarok**), which can create landscapes of unreality or morph objects or people entirely, the Devas halt Fate's cycle enough to replicate the illusion of past lives. After spending the appropriate Legend, the Scion's player rolls (Manipulation + Presence). For every success garnered on this roll *without* counting successes from Epic Manipulation, the God creates an illusory duplicate of himself. These duplicated Gods look and act exactly as the God using this power. In fact, in some fashion, they *are* the God, or at least an aspect ripped from her previous existences.

While these duplicates are illusions, they are entirely real in a physical sense; the power of Fate's maya is strong enough to fool the senses. Each copy of the God shares the same Abilities and Attributes as the progenitor. They have the same Willpower, Virtues and weapons as well. They do not, however, have any supernatural powers. The God's duplicates are free-thinking incarnations with a mind of their own. However, being former versions of the God, they are likely to think very alike. The God may not have overt control over them, but they will very rarely disagree or not listen to her.

Once summoned, the duplicates look and act exactly like their originator, down to mannerisms and speech patterns. It is impossible to tell the duplicates apart from their source – except when the God uses her supernatural powers, that is. With so many copies available, it is easy for the God to get lost in the crowd, making these duplicates perfect decoys and distractions. The replicated copies are active until the end of the next scene.

Samsarana (Samsara ••••• ••••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 2 Legend dots

The entire purpose of existing is to remove oneself from samsara's vicious cycle. Fate's hand holds everything in the effervescent waters of creation, with samsara's cycle forever in flux. The end of Fate's cycle is also the beginning; the process repeats, and the end becomes the beginning. All things die, but the Hindus believe that all things are reborn in accordance with the sum of their actions in life: Those who perform good actions are reborn into a good life, while the bad ones are born into squalor and danger. Gods, while divine, are not immune to the vagaries of death, and they persist in the same cycle as any mortal does. However, a God with this Boon can control the cycle a little better than the average mortal. She can choose how she is reborn!

When a God with this power takes enough damage to be considered dead, she may sacrifice two *dots* of Legend to be reborn. Her soul does not wither into the ether, her body does not rot. She simply is reborn with her entire identity intact (if not all of her renown). There is no roll associated with this power; the God will simply rise from the dead after an hour, a little less powerful than before, yet essentially still the same.

Once reborn, the God (or demigod) must reacquaint herself with her new level of Legend. All powers that require a Legend rating higher than her new rating are immediately deactivated. Any Epic Attributes over the limit for a demigod or God of her level are brought down to the new rating. (She does not, however, lose any Knacks). Any lost powers due to this Boon's effect are gone forever and must be purchased again with experience points.

Moksha (Samsara ••••• •••••)

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Awareness + Legend

Cost: 30 Legend

The ultimate goal for the Devas who is caught in samsara is to remove himself from the cycle forever, to extricate oneself from Fate's influence and simply cease to exist. The Sanskrit word for this release from samsara is moksha, or liberation, and it is an elusive achievement from all but the most skilled and patient God. To use this power, a Scion must sit in a meditative trance for one hour without interruption (generally in a yogic position). At the end of the hour, the player rolls his character's (Intelligence + Awareness + Legend). For every success scored, the God removes himself from Fate's grasp for one day. While in this state, the World reacts as if he did not exist. People ignore him, those Fatebound to him are removed from their attraction and all memories of the God are shady and uncertain. Magic does not affect the God, nor do other Boons. Gods cannot see or detect the liberated Scion while he is in this state. He can freely move between Worlds without the use of Axes Mundi by spending a point of Willpower. Not even the Titans and their aspects can sense the God's presence.

Consequently, the Devas in Nirvana cannot interact with the physical environment either without paying some cost. The Devas is not a ghost or a spirit. Rather, he is a non-entity amongst the material. He is liberated and free; going back to slavery is difficult and unwelcome. Fate does not like to have an outsider meddle in its affairs. Thus, whenever the liberated God wants to physically interact with his environment in a significant manner, he must spend a point of Legend in order to do so. By significant, we mean by interacting and manipulating material objects in a fashion outside of normal actions. Walking around is not significant; grabbing a titanspawn is. All Boons and Birthrights cost double to activate while in the liberated state.

If the God runs out of Legend points or temporary Willpower while liberated, he immediately returns to Fate's embrace. The World remembers the God wholly and completely again. The God may also return to Fate willingly by spending two points of temporary Willpower.

CREATURES

GARUDA (CREATURE ••••, GUIDE ••)

The mount of Vishnu and the scourge of serpents, Garuda is a fierce and determined creature, feared even by some of the Gods. With the body and limbs of a man and the head, beak and talons of an eagle, Garuda resembles the tengu of Japanese myth, albeit with greater ferocity and a prouder heritage.

Garuda became Vishnu's mount after attempting to steal some amrita from the God's abode in order to save his mother from becoming slaves to a host of serpents. After a long battle with the Gods (in which Garuda nearly defeated an entire band of them), he eventually succumbed to Vishnu's wisdom. In exchange for the amrita that Garuda stole, Vishnu would grant the half-man, half-eagle immortality. Garuda also promised to become Vishnu's mount. After devising a scheme with Indra, Garuda delivered the amrita to the serpents, but Indra stole the elixir from them right away, thwarting their plans while still allowing Garuda the opportunity to fulfill his promise to them. After this incident, Garuda made it his life's intent to destroy all serpents, often using them as food for him and his many sons.

Garuda is a proud mount, loyal to his owner yet particularly harsh to foul treatment. He does not willingly allow members of other pantheons to ride him unescorted by a Scion of the Devas, particularly those affiliated with the Loa (whose affiliation with snakes and serpents is too off-putting for Garuda). If any member of the Scion's band summons a serpent-like creature while Garuda is present, he will immediately attack the serpent and eat its corpse without hesitation or regret.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 6, Stamina 3, Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2, Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Virtues: Endurance 4, Harmony 3, Intellect 1, Order 1

Abilities: Animal Ken (eagles) 4, Athletics 4, Awareness 3, Brawl 3, Command 4, Fortitude 2, Larceny 3, Melee 5, Presence 3, Stealth 5, Thrown 3

Supernatural Powers: *Epic Attributes*: Epic Strength 2 (Crushing Grip, Holy Rampage), Epic Dexterity 1 (Untouchable Opponent)

Snake-bane: Garuda will immediately attack any snake or serpent in the vicinity. During battle, he will not attack another foe until all snakes are eliminated. After killing them, he will consume them, gaining one point of Legend for each serpent consumed.

Boons: Animal Command, Battle Cry

Flight: Garuda flies at six times his normal speed in battle, taking the normal modifiers for Move and Dash actions. Out of battle, he flies at a speed of around 50 miles per hour.

Join Battle: 6

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 12, Damage 3B, Parry DV -, Speed 5

Claw: Accuracy 14, Damage 5L, Parry DV 6, Speed 4

Talon: Accuracy 11, Damage 2L, Parry DV 6, Speed 5

Beak, Accuracy 12, Damage 3L, Parry DV 6, Speed 5

Soak: 0A/2L/3B

Health Levels: -0, -0, -0 -1, -1, -1, -2, -2, -4, -4, Inc.

Dodge DV: 7 **Willpower**: 7

Legend: 3 **Legend Points**: 9

Other Notes: None

CHUKWA (CREATURE ••)

Chukwa is the giant turtle that supports the World on its shell. As legend goes, the World sits on the shoulders of Maha-pudma, the first elephant, who in turn stands on the shell of Chukwa, who swims in Ksheerasagar, the primordial ocean of milk. A large, lumbering beast, Chukwa is serenely patient and dutiful to the wishes of the Devas, who have commanded the turtle to balance the World at all times and act as the foundation for all of creation. It is a difficult task, but one that Chukwa performs with the utmost of dignity and courage.

Since the siege of the Titans, Chukwa has been in a precarious position. While the milky ocean of Ksheerasagar straddles the realms of the World and the Overworld, he has been able to continue his duties unimpeded. However, the influence of the Titans has enacted fear and anxiety into Chukwa, and though he remains steadfast in the face of increasing pressure, the threats of the titanspawn have begun to show the strain in his mission. The increasing number of earthquakes, hurricanes and other natural disasters are a result of his trembling, the aftershock of fear reverberating throughout his shell, up the elephant and into the World.

When a Scion summons Chukwa, he is not summoning the actual tortoise supporting the World, but rather an avatar of the turtle. These turtles are slow and lumbering on land, almost inert. On solid ground, these turtles are not good creatures to have around: Not only are they massive (about three times the size of a Galapagos turtle), but they are also shiftless and lazy. Land is not the place they want to be. However, if a chukwa is summoned while in the water, it can easily zip past a speed boat or any other aquatic vessel. Some of the more pert chukwa have been known to challenge mermaids to swimming contests, easily besting the aquatic nymphs.

Any Scion may ride inside of a chukwa's shell, whether by land or by sea. There is plenty of space for the Scion to sit (although it may be a trifle uncomfortable and slimy); she must simply climb into the shell through the opening for the tortoise's head. This hole seals up once the chukwa pokes its head through. The chukwa will gladly transport

the Scion in its shell. However, the shell is only large enough for one Scion to ride inside at a time. A few Scions may be able to ride on top of the turtle, and the creature actively encourages such activities. Chukwa are friendly animals to most creatures and are not known to attack or engage in combat. They do not have many offensive capabilities, anyway. For them, a good offense is a great defense, and their shell is testament to that: It is practically impenetrable.

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 1, Stamina 9, Charisma 1, Manipulation 2, Appearance 1, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

Virtues: Endurance 2, Harmony 3, Intellect 1, Order 2

Abilities: Awareness 4, Control 4, Fortitude 5, Integrity 2, Melee 2, Survival 3

Supernatural Powers: *Epic Attributes*: Epic Stamina 6 (Inner Furnace, Self-Healing, Holy Fortitude, Body Armor, Regeneration, Skin Shedding)

Tank: Chukwas' shells are, for all intents and purposes, impenetrable; nothing can pierce or crush the shell. While inside the shell, Scions are impervious to attack from all sides. However, there is one soft spot: the Chukwa's head. The Chukwa can be killed with an attack to its head. This attack usually requires either a Trick Shot or aimed attack. If the Chukwa is dead, the fleshy innards dissolve into the ether, leaving the hard shell (and the Scion inside). The shell still retains its hardness, but the Scion is also vulnerable to aimed attacks and Trick Shots.

Submarine: While in water, the Chukwa swims at a speed of 40 miles per hour and does not need to come up for air. It can dive to a depth of one league, although the Scion inside is still subject to the vagaries of pressure and temperature. On land, the Chukwa walks at a Movement of 3.

Join Battle: 3

Attacks: *Bite*: Accuracy 5, Damage 3B, Parry DV -, Speed 5

Soak: 6A/14L/27B

Health Levels: (for head/legs/inner flesh) -0,-0,-1,-1,-2,-2,-4, Inc.

Dodge DV: 1 **Willpower**: 5

Legend: 2 **Legend Points**: 4

Surabhi (Creature •••, Relic ••)

Shortly after the birth of Lakshmi during the great Churning of the Ocean, the sacred cow Surabhi emerged. Known as the Cow of Wishes and the Beast of Plenty, Surabhi is an animal devoted to abundance of life and the fulfillment of hunger. The Devas rely upon this creature especially for its milk, which has been instrumental in nourishing the drought-stricken World since the Titans' siege. While the sacred cow is not a particularly strong offensive Creature, it is useful to a Scion in other ways. The most important of these is from its milk, which usually appears to Scions as amrita (pp. 178-179). Once a chapter, a Scion may milk Surabhi and attempt to recognize its milk as amrita. The difficulty for recognizing Surabhi's milk as amrita is two times the potency of the amrita instead of three times. However, the amrita's potency is at the discretion of the Storyteller.

Even if there is no successful recognition of amrita, the milk may still benefit the Scion. The milk is very sweet and hearty. The magical proteins in the milk help replenish energy and vitality. Any Scion that drinks from the milk gains a temporary bonus to their soak levels. One pint of milk adds one to the Scion's bashing soak for the next scene. Two pints adds a point of lethal soak. Three pints adds a level of aggravated damage soak. Anything over that limit makes the Scion sick: They have just had too much of a good thing. Large doses of Surabhi's milk act like a poison with a Tolerance - , Damage 5B/hour, Toxicity 4, Penalty 3.

Surabhi is often summoned through her relic, the Horn of Plenty. This drinking horn is never empty; usually, it is filled with a nourishing (yet bland) slurry of nutrients, proteins, carbohydrates and vitamins. It is enough for a Scion to survive on in the wild if she is out of food. By spending a point of Legend and dropping the Horn to the ground, Surabhi emerges from the Horn, ready to serve the Scion. The Horn also gives access to the Health Purview.

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 2, Stamina 5, Charisma 1, Manipulation 1, Appearance 4, Perception 4, Intelligence 2, Wits 4

Virtues: Endurance 3, Harmony 2, Intellect 2, Order 3

Abilities: Animal Ken (cows) 3, Awareness 4, Brawl 4, Command 4, Fortitude 5, Presence 5

Supernatural Powers: *Epic Attributes*: Epic Stamina 4 (Damage Conversion, Body Armor, Self-Healing, Solipsistic Well-being

Boons: Assess Health, Blessing of Health, Heal/Infect, Pratyave

Join Battle: 8

Attacks:

Gore: Accuracy 8, Damage 6L, Parry DV 4, Speed 5

Hoof: Accuracy 8, Damage 8B, Parry DV 4, Speed 4

Bite: Accuracy 7, Damage 2L, Parry DV -, Speed 4

Soak: 4A/10L/12B

Health Levels: -0,-0, -0, -0, -0, -0, -1, -1, -1, -1, -2, -2, -2, -2, -4, -4, -4, Inc.

Dodge DV: 3 **Willpower**: 6

Legend: 4 **Legend Points**: 16

Other Notes: Will not perform actions in combat except Guard unless attacked directly.

Followers

Chaturanga (Followers • - ••••, Relic ••)

Chaturanga is most commonly known as an early precursor to chess. The literal translation of chatur-anga-bala is "an army consisting of four parts," and that is exactly what a Scion receives once she summons these followers. The "four parts" of the chatur-anga are the elephant, chariot, cavalry and infantry; essentially, the starting pieces of the classic board game.

When given this Birthright, the Scion usually receives a set of carved playing pieces corresponding to the different classes of the chaturanga: gaja, an elephant raising its trunk in the air; ratha, a two-wheeled chariot without a rider; ashva, an armed soldier riding a horse; and bhata, a foot soldier holding a spear. The pieces give the Scion access to the War Purview, and the elephant figure (gaja) gives the Scion access to the Animal Purview. All four pieces are not required in order to access the War Purview, although the Animal Purview cannot be accessed without the gaja figure.

To summon the pieces, a Scion must spend a point of Legend and throw the figure or figures on the ground. The figures are small enough to fit two apiece in the Scion's palm; if the Scion is holding a weapon or another Relic in her hand, this handicaps the number of chaturanga she may summon at one time. The members of the chaturanga cannot perform an action in the same tick. Much like a game of chess, these followers act a turn at a time and in very idiosyncratic ways. They take orders only from their summoning Scion and, while sentient, do not act unless the Scion commands them.

Gaja: Primarily performs the Guard action. Uses the common animal Elephant template (**Scion: Hero** p. 331), although he is a sentient animal. He also has a Legend of 2 with 4 Legend points, and has the Aegis Guardian Boon (**Scion: Hero** p. 144)

Ratha: A sentient chariot that can be summoned to the Scion and used as transportation. While the Scion is riding the ratha, her Dash speed is -1 and does not incur a DV penalty.

Ashva: Used for flanking opponents. Can Aim his attacks and perform a Coordinated Assault along with the Scion. The rider is an Experienced Soldier (**Scion: Hero** p. 283) with a trident.

Bhata: Primarily used for Attacks with its spear. The bhata has the same stats as a Grunt Soldier (**Scion: Hero** p. 282-3).

Guides

Asvina (Guide •••)

Asvina are the horsemen of the Overworld, the heralds of light that usher in the first rays of dawn each morning and maintain this illumination throughout the day. The Asvina are inseparable twin brothers, the children of the God Surya and the nymph Saranyu. Dasra is more beautiful than the brightest day, while Nasatya is known as the "breaker of untruths." They are married to the daughters of Surya and are popular Guides to Scions of the sun God.

When a Scion calls upon the Asvina, both brothers will arrive. In a way this is quite a deal: Two horsemen are better than one. However, the brothers have a weakness: amrita. They love the stuff and devour it with glee. Thus, they will only work for a Scion who has at least two dots of the Amrita Relic or who can give them access to it. While the Asvina are immortal and hold importance to the Overworld, the other immortals of the Overworld know of their fondness (some Gods use the word "addiction") for the divine liquid and have tried to cut them off lest their celestial duties be impaired.

Despite this steep cost, the Asvina supply numerous benefits to Scions. Their most useful trait is that of the healer. The brothers are known as the heavenly physicians and are often found in the World during pestilent outbreaks around the Indian subcontinent. The mission of these horsemen is to heal the sick with the divine light, whether they be the blind lepers of the streets of Calcutta or the polluted minds of cultists, extremists and hate groups. The Asvina abhor violence and will not come to the aid of Scions who are currently in combat or even join a battle; if forced into such a situation, they will flee and escape with ease as their chariot is nearly as fast as the speed of light. (If a Scion asks politely, he may even catch a ride on their chariot.)

Both brothers have the Generic Mortal template (**Scion: Hero** p. 280-1) with a few exceptions. They both have a Medicine skill of 5, an Intelligence of 7, Wits 7, Dexterity 5, and Awareness 5. They have Epic Intelligence 3, with the Fast Learner, Teaching Prodigy and Mulitasking Knacks. They have all the Boons from the Health Purview through the fifth dot, a Willpower of 7 and a Legend of 6. They will never attack something, even if compelled to by force.

Relics

Amrita

(Relic • - • • • • •)

According to the legends of the Asuras, amrita is the substance stolen by the Devas from their beloved master, Vritra. The reason for this theft was the chance to obtain immortality and Godhood, something only bestowed upon by Vritra himself to his doting followers. This greatly angered the Titan, who, once his divine liquid was spirited away from him, became so enraged that he waged holy war against the Devas. His spite was so great that he determined to suck all the waters of the World, especially his lost amrita, so that no being could benefit anymore from the blessed, quenching liquid.

If you told this story to a Deva, she would laugh in your face. To them, amrita is the nectar of the Gods, their source of nourishment and a refreshing break from the hardships of being divine. And it's delicious, too.

Whatever story you believe, amrita is found everywhere in the World, if you know what you're looking for. More than just ambrosia or soma, amrita is the sweet juice of creation, the etheric fuel for a God's immortality. Gulping down a cup of this golden, intoxicating liquid can do wonders for a God, or even a Scion.

Amrita collects in pools throughout the World. Originating in Ksheerasagar, the primordial ocean of milk, and flowing down the peak of Mount Meru, amrita is found throughout the World, the Overworlds and Underworlds regardless of the pantheon. The other pantheons might not know of its existence nor wish to acknowledge its presence, wary of its supposed connection to the Titans. Not so for the Devas: The more extravagant Gods of the pantheon have been known to bathe in its waters for centuries, basking in its power and slurping down its essence.

Amrita gathers in the most unexpected locations and at the most inopportune times. If you are searching for a pool of amrita, you will not find it. Rather, you will stumble across it without realizing what it is. Amrita pools are also of varying potencies. The number of dots of amrita determines its potency and thus its therapeutic effect. If a player wants to determine whether a pool of liquid might be amrita, she must roll her (Perception + Occult + Legend). The difficulty for this roll is three times the potency of the amrita (e.g. the number of dots of amrita). If a Scion does not acknowledge the amrita for what it is, then the liquid is the mundane substance it appears to be: water, blood, soda, coffee and so on.

Once recognized, a Scion may collect amrita. The potency of the amrita pool determines how much she may take:

Amrita potency	Total that can be taken
1	5 cups
2	4 cups
3	3 cups
4	2 cups
5	1 cup

Amrita is normally collected in flasks or skins. A Scion may carry no more than a half-gallon (eight cups) of amrita on their person at time: Any more amrita causes the divine substance to dilute and turn to savory, mundane honey.

The higher the amrita's potency, the more powerful the Relic. One dot of amrita heals one point of bashing damage per cup of amrita consumed. Two-dot amrita heals one point of lethal damage per cup. Three dots of the nectar heals one point of aggravated damage per cup consumed. Four-dot amrita gives one point of temporary Willpower per cup consumed (this dot may exceed the maximum normally allowed). Five-dot amrita gives one Legend point back to the Scion (which may not exceed the Scion's maximum). Additionally, if a titanspawn consumes or comes into contact with amrita, they suffer one point of lethal damage per dot of amrita per cup consumed.

Mortals and non-legendary animals gain the same boons from amrita as Scions. However, the more potent the liquid, the more devastating the amrita's effects are to the mortal psyche.

Indra's Carafe

(Relic • •, One Unique One-Dot Power, One Purview)

No Deva enjoys the bountiful pleasures of amrita more than Indra, whose entire body was darkened to a swarthy complexion from imbibing so much of the divine nectar. A visit to Indra's heavenly abode will attest to this fact: Each room of his palace has jugs and vessels filled with the substance (many of the pitchers have seen better days, much like their owner). He has so many of these items, in fact, that he loves to give them away to his Scions at their first Visitations. Indra's Carafe can be anything from a metal flask with a simple symbol etched into the front to a hefty, standard-issue travel thermos that looks like it was picked up at an Army surplus store. Access to the Carafe grants the Scion the ability to use the War Purview. The Carafe also has the added benefit of vibrating when it is

near a source of amrita, although the player must still make a successful roll to recognize the substance.

Bagh-nakh

(Relic ••, Two Purviews)

One of the many weapons devised during the early wars against the Asuras, the bagh-nakh ("tiger's claw") was one of the most vicious and deadly on the battlefield. The weapon itself is quite simple: a wooden stick with three large, curving blades protruding forth. Holding the stick in the fist with the blades emerging between the fingers, the weapon resembles the razor-sharp claws of a tiger. The bagh-nakh has an Accuracy +1, Damage +3L, Defense +1, Speed 4 and can deliver piercing blows. The tiger claw also grants access to the Animal and Guardian purviews.

Gandiva

(Relic •••••, One Unique Two-Dot Power, Three Purviews)

Gandiva is the bow of the greatest hero of Hindu legend, Arjuna. Agni, who fell ill and needed sustenance, attempted to consume an entire forest with his ravenous fire. Indra, whose rains soothed the World, attempted to thwart Agni's destruction with a powerful storm. Agni could not stop the warrior-God on his own and enlisted the aid of Arjuna, who distracted and held back Indra's showers long enough for Agni to complete his consumption. This enraged Indra, who felt slighted by his fellow warrior. The relationship between Agni and Indra was never the same after this incident, and when Agni awarded Gandiva to Arjuna, Indra's temper flared even worse.

Gandvia is an ornate bow made of solid (but strangely flexible) oak. It is longer than most bows, and its drawstring is fashioned from the thread of Fate itself. The bow gives a Scion access to the Justice, Magic and Fire Purviews. It has an Accuracy +3, Damage +3L, Range 40, Speed 5. It can never be burned nor can it be broken in half. Any arrow that it shoots instantly catches fire upon hitting its target. However, it has one drawback: The bow will not fire anything if it is wet, and using the bow often attracts rain and storms. Indra is still very angry with Arjuna for the deception and vows to disrupt the bow whenever possible.

Scions of the Devas

The Scions of the Devas are people living as deeply within the karmic cycle as possible. Some on the upswing and some on the downswing, they are a varied bunch who all share the commonality of knowing and accepting a place in the universe. The following are two sample Scions of the Devas: one a hero-level Scion of Ganesha, and the other a demigod Scion of Kali.

SAROJIN PRIMAL
SCION OF GANESHA

Some people are just born lucky. At least, that's what Sarojin Primal keeps telling himself. He never truly believed in luck as he grew up, especially since he wasn't one of the lucky ones. While he watched his mother struggle through the ranks of mediocre jobs in the outskirts of Detroit, Sarojin busied himself with the only distraction he knew: information. From the time he could read (which was surprisingly early), Sarojin was not without a book in his hand, the television turned to some infotainment channel or the radio blaring NPR (sometimes all three at once).

When these distractions got too much for his mother, he went to the park to people-watch or play chess with the elderly. When that failed to entertain him sufficiently, Sarojin took to another hobby of his: amateur sleuthing. His keen eye and sharp wit allowed him to track his neighbors undetected, noting their character tics and other minutiae. He could talk himself out of most situations, and those he followed never seemed to get too upset when they caught him snooping. Sarojin figured that was because of his natural talents; his mother just thought he was lucky not to get assaulted.

Sarojin was a confident child, excelling with ease in his scholastic endeavors. Despite his talents, his mother constantly worried about his direction in life. A constant overachiever, Sarojin was eminently successful, but he lacked passion for any single subject. At least, that was the case until towards the end of high school. During his senior year, he talked his way into a local poker tournament. Even though he was new to the game, he cleaned house and would have advanced to the next round if his mother hadn't discovered his deceit and forced him to give the money back. Nonetheless, he finally found his passion in life: poker.

After high school, he went to college and medical school at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas, a deal he brokered with his mother: He would still get a top notch medical degree while indulging in his new-found obsession. Sarojin alternated his time between his intensive studies and the poker tables, graduating with honors and completing two years of medical school. But the cards and the chips continued to call to him, and as he spent more time at the casinos, he spent less time studying. Even though he was the top of his class, he dropped out of school entirely to join the professional poker circuit.

Poker came naturally to Sarojin, and he quickly rose in the ranks, making it to the final table of the World Series of Poker in his first year on the circuit. When asked about his run, he attributed it purely to skill; others on the tour considered him the luckiest rookie they've ever seen. Either way, he continued to press his luck (or skill) in the Las Vegas nightlife.

Halfway through last season, Sarojin's mother passed away. He was at a tournament when it happened and was not notified until after he ran the final table. The next week for him was a blur: His normally even demeanor broke down, and he embarked an unprecedented bender, fueled by drugs, booze and gambling. While he normally avoided the seedier tables, his binge brought him to a high stakes game among the most ruthless criminals in Vegas. Despite his inebriated state, he swept through the competitors.

As the men left the room swearing revenge on Sarojin, a new opponent emerged from the darkness with a briefcase full of cash and a white lotus pinned to his lapel. Sarojin challenged him to a game, unusually cocky about his chances. The man sat without saying a word, drawing a deck of cards made of ivory from his jacket. They played poker until sunrise, and Sarojin lost soundly to the mysterious man. His luck had finally run out. Broke and depressed, Sarojin wept for the first time since his mother died. The mysterious man put a reassuring arm on his shoulder, then another and then two more, telling Sarojin that he was his father and that his mother had been brought to live with him for the time being. Ganesha gave his son the King of Spades from his ivory deck, as well as his noose and chakra (a sharp, round disc that can be thrown or used as a melee weapon). The God left the room, warning Sarojin of the impending ambush by the Mafiosi outside. Sarojin stepped out of the room with his new Birthrights and beat the mobsters for the second time that night.

Roleplaying Hints: Sarojin's abundant self-confidence borders on arrogant. He is a decisive leader with a wealth of knowledge, and prefers information and intellect over gut instinct in nearly every situation. While he is known for his poker playing, he is not a gambler by nature: He views poker as a mental exercise more than a game of chance – although the fact that he inherited his father's good fortune certainly doesn't hurt his game. Sarojin very much resembles his father's countenance, from the big ears and nose to his potbelly. He is slightly sensitive to this fact, but uses any jabs at his appearance as an opportunity to challenge the offender to a battle of wits that they will (undoubtedly) lose.

Birthrights: The ivory playing card that Ganesha left with Sarojin is constructed from part of the God's broken tusk. Sarojin shaves a bit of dust off it while casting spells from the Magic Purview. He uses the Pasa (Ganesha's noose) as a belt as well as a Clinch. The chakra left to Sarojin is his main weapon; He keeps it in his pocket as a coin, and by spending a point of Legend, it will grow to full size instantaneously.

Spells: The Unlidded Eye

SCION
HERO

Sarojin Primal Name	Professional poker player Calling	Devas Pantheon
 Player	Competitor Nature	Ganesha God

SAROJIN PRIMAL

ATTRIBUTES

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●○○○○○○○○	Charisma	●●●○○○○○○○	Perception	●●●●○○○○○○
Dexterity	●●●○○○○○○○	Manipulation	●●●○○○○○○○	Intelligence	●●●●○○○○○○
Stamina	●●●●○○○○○○	Appearance	●●○○○○○○○○	Wits	●●●●○○○○○○

ABILITIES

■ Academics	●●●○○	□ Craft	○○○○○	□ Melee	●○○○○
□ Animal Ken	●○○○○	□ Craft	○○○○○	□ Occult	●○○○○
□ Art	○○○○○	□	○○○○○	□ Politics	●○○○○
□	○○○○○	□ Empathy	○○○○○	□ Presence	○○○○○
■ Athletics	●○○○○	■ Fortitude	●○○○○	■ Science (Biology)	●●○○○
□ Awareness	●●●○○	□ Integrity	○○○○○	□	○○○○○
□ Brawl	●○○○○	□ Investigation	●●○○○	□	○○○○○
■ Command	●●○○○	□ Larceny	●●○○○	□ Stealth	●○○○○
□ Control	○○○○○	□ Marksmanship	●○○○○	□ Survival	●●○○○
□	○○○○○	□ Medicine	●●○○○	□ Thrown	●●●○○

BIRTHRIGHTS

Relic (Pasa, Guardian Purview) 2, Relic (Ivory playing card, Magic Purview) 1, Relic (Chakra, Mystery, Prophecy Purview) 3

WEAPONS

Chakra: Acc 7/5 (thrown/melee), Dmg 4L, Parry DV 3, Sp 6/4 (thrown/melee), Rng 10

KNACKS

Damage Conversion, Holy Fortitude, Perfect Memory, Math Genius, Opening Gambit

BOONS

Vigil Brand, Mystery 1, Prophecy 1, Magic 1, Kriya

WILLPOWER

●●●●●●○○○○

□□□□□□□□□□

SOAK

A 2 L 4 B 6

ARMOR

A____ L____ B____

HEALTH

0	-1	-1	-2	-2	-4	I
□	□	□	□	□	□	□

VIRTUES

Endurance	●●●○○
Harmony	●●○○○
Intellect	●●●○○
Order	●○○○○

LEGEND

●●●○○○

○○○○○○

Legend Points 9 | ____

EXPERIENCE

Annie X
Scion of Kali

Annie X's power has increased dramatically since her first Visitation. She had initially dealt with her destructive feelings through music. Her punk band Kickwire, a darling of the underground concert scene, paired well with alcohol and drugs to allow her to escape her urges to tear everything around her down. Rebellious acts against her father, a powerful British businessman, began with her rejecting his name to reflect the shame she felt in him. Once she found out that Kali had once taken a male form and was actually her father (which more than explained her Anglo-Indian features), she began to rebel in earnest.

She set fire to one of his factories and had a very open affair with one of the workers. Piercings now cover most of her ears and nose. Her mortal parents see the tattoos on her arms and back and her heavily hair-sprayed hair (which is always changing color) and regard her with revulsion. Unfortunately, teenage rebellion never satisfies for long. Performance still gives her a catharsis that tempers the boredom of a privileged aristocratic life. But now she requires amrita, the divine drink, to quell the rage deep within her.

Her second Visitation happened after a great battle. She had been separated from her Band and had actually died after being skewered over a hundred times by group of vengeful demons. Before her journey on the afterlife Yama had roped her soul and delivered it to Kali. The entire trip Annie chewed and clawed at the rope and had nearly severed it before Yama loosened it in Kali's presence. Seeing that Annie's determination and rage continued even after death, Kali deemed her ready to ascend to a higher existence and fashioned for her a necklace made of skulls like her own. Through it Annie now exercises power over both Darkness and Death.

Now she is a veritable engine of annihilation — both to herself and anyone that dares tread in her path. Her Band, growing ever wary of her power and her demeanor, are more often keen to just to take a step back when she hurtles into battle, letting her loose upon whatever unfortunate thing they may face. After the battle is over they are ever more hesitant to help her tend her wounds, not knowing how far she pushed herself in victory. Sarojin swore that during the last battle he saw her skin darken and her eyes turn a color he could not even describe when pressed. It has been little changes like that, subtle though they may be, that portend an even more dangerous future for Annie and those around her.

Roleplaying Hints: Now that Annie has attained demigod status, she is becoming increasingly detached—sometimes from reality itself. Before, she was easy to track by considering what the average person might do in a situation and figuring that she would do the exact opposite to get the biggest rise out of those she encountered, but that punk vibe has shifted. She almost seems to be removing herself from decisions—going off on her own more often and being less willing to express herself even to her own Band. Even in combat the raw emotion she once displayed, while still there, is becoming more internalized—as if she viewed everything as a set task or job to be completed and put behind her.

Birthrights: One of her first gifts from her mother was a prithu-parsu: a long, elegant blade similar to a katana. With this weapon, she has access to the Chaos and War Purviews. Her mother also gave her a full set of chaturanga Relics, of which only two remain in her possession (ratha and gaja). Annie's second Visitation brought her the Skull necklace, which she keeps wrapped around her arm like a bracelet during her shows. Completing her outfit is the Death Girdle, a leathery apron made from human flesh (which she claims to be leather made from a stingray). Recently Annie came into possession of the Naga's Flask, a prized Relic that grants her access to the Psychopomp Purview, as well as a special elixir that heals all poisons caused by snakes.

SCION
DEMIGOD

Name	Calling	Pantheon
Annie X	Punk rocker	Devas
Player	Rebel	Kali
	Nature	**God**

ANNIE X

ATTRIBUTES

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●●●○○○○○○ ■■■□□□□□□□	Charisma	●●●●○○○○○○ ■■□□□□□□□□	Perception	●●○○○○○○○○ □□□□□□□□□□
Dexterity	●●●●●○○○○○ ■■□□□□□□□□	Manipulation	●●●○○○○○○○ □□□□□□□□□□	Intelligence	●●○○○○○○○○ □□□□□□□□□□
Stamina	●●●●●○○○○○ □□□□□□□□□□	Appearance	●●●●●○○○○○ ■■□□□□□□□□	Wits	●●●○○○○○○○ □□□□□□□□□□

ABILITIES

□ Academics	○○○○○	□ Craft	○○○○○	■ Melee	●●●●○
□ Animal Ken	●○○○○	□	○○○○○	■ Occult	●●○○○
□ Art (Music)	●●●○○	□	○○○○○	□ Politics	○○○○○
□	○○○○○	□ Empathy	●○○○○	■ Presence	●●●○○
□ Athletics	●●○○○	■ Fortitude	●●○○○	□ Science	○○○○○
■ Awareness	●●●○○	□ Integrity	●○○○○	□	○○○○○
■ Brawl	●●●●○	□ Investigation	○○○○○	□	○○○○○
□ Command	●●●○○	□ Larceny	●○○○○	□ Stealth	●○○○○
□ Control (Driving)	●○○○○	□ Marksmanship	●●●○○	□ Survival	●○○○○
□	○○○○○	□ Medicine	○○○○○	□ Thrown	●○○○○

BIRTHRIGHTS

Relic (Skull Necklace, Darkness, Death Purviews) 4, Relic (Naga's flask, Psychopomp Purview) 2, Relic (Prithu-parsu, Chaos, War Purview) 2, Relic (Death Girdle), Followers (Chaturanga- ratha, gaja) 2 (Relic 2)

WEAPONS

Prithu-parsu: Acc 10, Dmg 6L, Parry DV 5, Sp 4

Vai - Acc. 8, Dmg 5L, Rng 100, Clip 30, Speed 5

KNACKS

Charmer, Crowd Control, Divine Rampage, Dreadful Mien, Holy Rampage, Lightning Sprinter, Serpent's Gaze, Shockwave, Untouchable Opponent

BOONS

Battle Cry, Blessing of Bravery, Death Senses, Eye of the Storm, Hornet's Nest, Kriya, Karma, Night Eyes, Shadow Mask

WILLPOWER

●●●●●●●○○○

□□□□□□□□□□

SOAK

A 2 L 5 B 7

ARMOR

Death Girdle

A ____ L 2 B 2

EXPERIENCE

VIRTUES

Endurance	●●●●○
Harmony	●●●○○
Intellect	●○○○○
Order	●○○○○

LEGEND

●●●●●●○○○○○○ 36 Legend Points

HEALTH

0	0	0	0	0	-4	I
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COSMOLOGY

NARAKA (THE UNDERWORLD)

The Underworld is a difficult concept for the followers of the Devas. Technically speaking, death is a fleeting part of Samsara's continual cycle; the lands of the dead are not final resting places for eternal glory or shame, the wicked are not tortured for eons by wicked monsters nor are heroes lavished with the doting attention in celestial drinking halls in the Overworld. Instead, the Underworld is a stop-over for wicked souls, an interrogation room or a supernatural prison with varying sentences for the indentured victims. For the truly evil, the worst punishment is not an eternity of pain through hell-fire or torture, but rather the very real spiritual and physical suffering of everyday existence. Wicked men are reborn as lowly creatures as a result of their evil lives; what is a better punishment than living the life of a rat or a worm? While the idea of an eternal cycle of spite and revenge may seem cynical, the Devas have a rather hopeful system in place: Even if reborn as a lowly creature, there is always the chance for a better life. One's actions decide one's Fate, and in samsara's ever-moving rotation, there is hope to move on to bigger and better things.

This is not to say that the Devas have no Underworld, nor to say that their Underworld is a cakewalk. Rather, Naraka is a place of incessant pain and misery, much like most other pantheons' Underworld. Those unfortunate souls who are brought into Naraka are subject to a tenure of suffering and anguish for the evils committed in their previous life. Naraka contains seven layers, with each layer devoted to increasing degrees of wicked souls. People confined to the first six layers are still allowed the redemptive powers of reincarnation; only in the final layer are truly evil souls stuck for eternity with no escape from the torture.

YAMA, YAMA, YAMA

The astute reader might have noticed that the Celestial Bureaucracy has multiple Yamas in their Underworld (p. 114), each one a lesser immortal to the God of Death. Is this a coincidence, or is this intentional on the part of the Chinese pantheon? Depending on who you ask, the answer might be either dismissed outright or cause a God to banish you to the bottomless pit of Talatala. Based on the latter reaction, it is best not to ask Yama of his opinion. But his Scions may know his true feelings, including a possible plan for revenge.

YAMAPURI, YAMA'S PALACE

Like an exacting bureaucrat, Yama prefers to handle his business matters up-front. Therefore, his simple palace is the first stop upon entering the Underworld. The path leading to his palace is barren and plain, almost eerily so. Only wide enough for two men to walk abreast, the humbly paved road is surrounded on both sides by fields of dark grass. Common to this path are Yama's dogs, twin beasts on constant alert who stare down guilty souls with their eyes (four on each dog). Ever vigilant, these hounds are nevertheless silent except in the presence of Yama, who learns great secrets from their low howls and heavy barking. Traveling along this road takes exactly four hours and forty minutes, no matter the pace of travel. For this reason, a body may not have funerary rites performed on it until after this time period, or else the soul will forever walk this road awaiting judgment from Yama.

Leading up a stark hill to Yama's palace, the path ends at a simple yet elegant doorway, the entrance to the palace. Although it is deemed as such, Yamapuri is hardly a mansion or an elegant castle of magical wonders. Rather, it is a square and utilitarian construction, bare in decoration, modest in size, yet firm and heartily supported. Upon entering the palace, numerous candles cast soft shadows on the walls. Wooden furniture, old and sturdy with very few engravings, adorn the antechamber, perfectly suiting the quiet, collected demeanor of its occupant. Only a handful of doors align the side of the antechamber, all of them locked for centuries, their contents unknown except to Yama. A larger door at the end of the room is the only one accessible to the traveling soul, and each soul visiting the Underworld must go through it.

Inside the portal, Yama sits with his balance, ready to judge the soul for its eventual destiny in either one of the layers of Naraka or the resplendent paradises on Mount Meru. Stern-faced and patient, Yama is ever-vigilant to his duties as judge of the dead. Despite knowing that the Underworld is but a temporary place for most souls, his judgments are both swift and indisputable, pronounced with the utmost of dignity and respect for the journey the soul must take before reincarnating. Part of his decision-making process is through experience: Being the first man to die, he can emphasize with the travails of samsara's harsh cycle. But another aspect of his decision-making sits directly beside him through all the verdicts of the Underworld: Chitragupta, the record-keeper of the Devas and son of Indra, whose collected volumes contain documentation of all the good and evil deeds performed by the living souls. Without the need to plead one's case, Yama and Chitragupta confer over a soul before consulting the balance of good and evil, which magically turns in either direction. Good souls are immediately whisked away to Mount Meru; wicked souls are led by Yama's dogs to their specific level of Naraka.

The Lesser Levels - Put, Avichi and Samhata

After Yama's judgment, those souls that only barely break the evil are thrust into the first few areas of Naraka. Put is primarily the area for childless souls, a zone of withering infertility that mocks and mimics the sterile and fruitless life of the barren and fallow. A craggy plain of dry earth, still air and isolation is the punishment for these souls. Souls left wandering this plain can find no solace in one another. Through the vast stretches of loneliness and abandonment, they must wander forth in search of an end to their bleak existence. While rumors spread among the wanderers of springs and oases in the arid plain, there have been no confirmed sightings of nourishment for these souls.

On the other side of Put resides Avichi, the field of waiting. Known as the "field without pleasure," this level of Naraka is reserved for those souls awaiting their next cycle in samsara's journey. Simple and plain, this field would appear as an abandoned or ill-maintained lot in the World, a vast plot of land with wasted potential. Instead, especially after the journey through Put, Avichi is a lush terrarium of fecundity. It is possible that Yama designed the area as a bit of respite after the wandering wasteland of Put, although the short grass and dark earth is not exactly much relief. As its description implies, Avichi is an outdoor waiting room, an unadorned foyer before leaving Naraka for the World again. If Put is an area of isolation and wandering, Avichi is a place of isolation inertia. No movement occurs once a soul reaches this area; the exhaustion of a tired life sets in, and all that can be anticipated is waiting. There is no pain in this field; there is no pleasure, either.

Beyond this field is the valley Samhata, the first of the areas pertaining to evil and wicked souls. Whereas Put and Avichi are designed for internal reflection and mental exhaustion, Samhata begins the physical torture and outward expression of pain and suffering for the soul. A steep drop in elevation lands the soul in an unrelentingly warm and humid valley. Certainly more fertile than the previous layers of Naraka, Samhata is an eerie mix of tropical climate, jungle atmosphere and vicious existence. The valley is a bowl of envy and jealousy, an arena for unrequited passions and unfulfilled rage. The wildlife of this valley is a dark caricature of the most vicious jungle impression: nemean tigers, poisonous flowers, raging bulls, man-eating trees. The physical landscape morphs to harass and aggravate those trapped in its bounds. Samhata's dreadful valley is designed to strike at vulnerabilities; once the mind is weak, the body is that much more susceptible. To add to the torment, it is common for the soul to see shades of former enemies within the dark vegetation. Old rivals long dead pop out and attack the soul, tearing and rending at the remnants of the body. Old wounds start to ache anew. New terrors thrust themselves into the mix in a terrible blend of internal and external nightmares.

Tamisra

The next level of Naraka is the perpetual darkness of Tamisra. Out of the depths of Samhata's dark jungle, the soul

stuck in Tamisra is left wandering a preternatural darkness beyond anything experienced in the World. The transition from Samhata to Tamisra is not a specified location, but instead comes from the compounding dread and despair from the abandonment of goodness and hope. At the weakest moment the soul experiences while traversing through Samhata, her transition into Tamisra begins; the ever-present darkness of this sphere consumes the soul. The physical landscape of Tamisra is not entirely known to many of the souls stuck in this zone. The darkness is so thick and pervasive that it is difficult to detect the geography of the area. A pall lies over the entire area – as well as the areas following Tamisra – and any attempt to map it out has been heretofore ineffective.

For Scions with or without the Darkness Purview, Tamisra is a difficult area in which to maneuver. Even with the Night Eyes Boon (Darkness •) activated, the caliginous area cannot fully be seen. Vague shadows might appear to the Night Eyed Scion a moment before she tramples into them, but they still appear as anomalies and unknown black shapes. Scions with Epic Perception might fare slightly better, as the Knacks of this Epic Attribute can overcome some of the gloom (but not all of it). Those Scions with Telescopic Senses, Spatial Attunement, Environmental Awareness and Subliminal Warning may traverse Tamisra with their supernaturally enhanced senses outside of sight; at this point, the darkness is visual only. Unseen dangers wandering Tamisra do not surprise these Scions as easily, although even these Knacks cannot fully overcome this darkness, nor can they create a reliable cartographical portrait of the land. Even with the heightened senses, Tamisra still remains a dark mess, as if it were a black hole in the middle the Underworld.

Rijisha

With a slight break in the persistent darkness comes the land known as Rijisha. While the spheres before this region have dealt with the external and internal forces that terrorize the wandering soul in various tortures, Rijisha amplifies the menace to its culmination. Known as the land of selfishness, the gloomy plains of Rijisha are reserved for the especially egotistical, greedy and vain souls, whose ultimate wickedness in their life manifests as terrible attacks on their own person. Rambling through the darkness (fainter than Tamisra's, but still prevalent and pervasive) are distorted and perverted forms of the self. These ominous doppelgangers exist to intimidate, frighten and disturb the individual soul. Whereas Samhata had nemean creatures from an intensely depraved version of the World, Rijisha's terror comes in a more personal form: Every nemean animal, every terrible insect or unnatural menace is a skewed depiction of the self summoned to rend individuality from the soul. Wicked wisps of smoke meld into the faces of the individual; a monstrous insect barely resembles the self as it runs full throttle at the roving soul. All who enter Rijisha are attacked incessantly by these phantoms.

Kudmala and the River Vaitarani

If the soul can survive the personal onslaught of Rijisha, she continues through the eternal darkness into Kudmala. The last resort for hope amongst wayward souls, Kudmala is the final realm of Naraka in which evil and punished souls may experience reincarnation to the World. While this morsel of hope may seem like enough motivation to endure the pangs and suffering, most souls would rather risk a lowly reincarnation than face this final realm.

Kudmala is situated almost entirely on the banks of the river Vaitarani, which also forms the barrier between this region and Kakola, the final sphere of Naraka. Vaitarani is a churning, burbling torrent of vile liquids: pus, blood, excrement and filth. Its stench fills the air, forcing all who enter the area to make a (Stamina + Willpower) roll. Any failed roll results in the visitor to induce vomiting once an hour until the roll succeeds. Even those Scions with Epic Stamina find the entire area to be unsettling and barely tolerable.

The souls stuck in this level are subject to horrible afflictions, poisons and ailments. Incurable lesions and sores adorn the body, blisters form on the hands and toes and the entire body is consumed in sprouting, bud-like wounds. These tumors and sores envelop the body, growing larger and more malignant the longer the soul stays in the area. In addition to the (Stamina + Willpower) roll, every player must also roll their (Stamina + Fortitude) with a target of three successes per roll. If the requisite successes are not attained, the Scion starts to form one of the sores on her body. At first, these sores are red bumps on the body. After an hour, each sore grows into a large lump. Another hour brings a festering hole in the lump, causing infection. Every hour after that, the hole increases. The Scion takes a point of bashing damage for every hour that this wound is open. It cannot be healed in any way except by drinking amrita or escaping this area of Naraka. The damage dealt by these sores is stackable: the more sores, the more damage per hour. Reaching the other side of Vaitarani, the sores immediately weaken and alleviate.

Kakola

The final level of Naraka is Kakola, the realm of the unforgivable. The souls trapped in this realm are hopeless and lost forever; Fate has abandoned them, leaving them to the whim of feckless vengeance and anger. Their lives do not exist outside of Fate; rather, they are stuck in Fate's deepest strand, forced forever to endure the agony and suffering of Naraka.

A tributary of the Vaitarani runs through the heart of Kakola. The river winds it ways through the various fiery pits that dot the landscape, coursing its way to the sword-tree. This tree, whose branches and trunk are made from dark iron and bronze, towers over the region, its sharp leaves and pointed branches aiming at all the souls who are doomed to this realm. Flowing past this menacing flora, the river empties into the final edge of Naraka: Talatala, the bottomless pit.

Throughout the land, demon attendants break branches off the sword-tree to use as spits with which they roast the bodies over massive fires. Sometimes, truly wicked men are spitted with warped versions of their own evil weapons. For a bit of respite, the demons leave the tortured bodies on slabs of warm rock and feed them buckets of putrefaction from Vaitarani. Despite all the torture, however, the entire

OPTIONAL RULE: SO IT GOES

There is one additional way for a Scion of the Devas to reach Naraka: death. When a Scion dies, she goes to her respective Underworld to face her uncertain Fate; the Devas are no exception. Physical death is not the end of the World, since it is only a natural part of the journey through Samsara. To be born into the World, regardless of heritage, is to die at some part, and to die is to be reborn. Thus, as a last resort, a Scion may take this drastic measure to reach the Underworld, if need be. Of course, this passage into the Underworld may not be intentional, especially if the player has encountered a string of bad rolls or a particularly malevolent Storyteller.

If a Scion of the Devas dies, her player may (at the Storyteller's discretion) continue to play that character as if she were still alive. After a period of time decided upon by the Storyteller, the Scion may be reborn, transmigrated back to the World in another form. Doing this always suffers the same effects of the Samasarana Boon: two permanent dots of Legend. The difference between this rule and the Samasarana Boon is that death and the subsequent journey into the Underworld results in a reincarnation into an entirely different being. The Scion could re-emerge into the World as another person entirely, as a newborn baby of mortal parents, or even as an animal! The end result may vary depending on the Scion's actions in her previous life. There are no hard and fast rules for working this out, but it is something that may be decided between a player and her Storyteller for the good of the game. There are a few guidelines to follow if you choose to use this rule:

• A Scion should be reborn a Scion. This game is about the children of Gods, and while it is tempting to bring anthropomorphic animals into the mix, the players are there to play the Epic Heroes, not the Followers or Guides or even Creatures. If such is the case, then remember…

• Only punish the truly bad characters. Regardless of the grievances a Storyteller might have with some players, a Scion is reborn as a lower being only if it led a truly evil or wicked life (e.g. less virtuous) than expected. Only the egregious characters should come back as a mortal.

• Alternately, really virtuous Scions may come back as demigods. If a player died in a spectacular way or was exceptionally virtuous, then their character may come back as an even more Legendary character than before. This bonus should only be the result of great roleplaying and unwavering adherence to a pantheon's ideals (or a really heroic way of going out).

land is silent; there are no more screams possible from these tortured souls, as their Fate is evident and accepted.

After years, possibly millennia, of torture, Yama makes a final visit to the soul, inspecting his affliction and bodily status. If he finds that the victim has endured enough torture, he gives the demons a permission to cast the body and soul into Talatala, from which there is no escape. Cast asunder with a casual toss, the soul falls, eternally, through the endless chasm, forgotten, unloved and abandoned by Fate and the Gods.

Passages to Naraka

Throughout a Scion's cycle in Samsara, odds are good that one of his incarnations resulted in a visit to Naraka. Thus, the visit to Naraka during a Scion's lifetime may seem almost second-nature. Granted, they won't remember any of the details of their previous visit to the Underworld – the fog of memory does that to a person – but various shades and aspects of the realm will seem oddly familiar. Nevertheless, for these Scions, their previous trips to Naraka most likely resulted from the typical means: death. There are a few passages to the Underworld available to Scions without repeating Samsara's endless cycle.

Tombs and Funerary Architecture: Although burial is not a particularly common means of funerary tradition in Hinduism, there are a few sites and tombs that can act as Passageways to Naraka. Of the most popular are the funeral pyres and pits that are found in some villages, especially if these pyres have been recently used.

Natural Features: The Ganges river, the holiest river in the Indian subcontinent, has long been considered an important part of Hindu burial tradition. In earlier times, the ashes of the recently deceased were scattered among its waters. Other times, it was the burial tomb itself, casting the bodies of the dead down its banks in a long, natural funeral procession. Along with other holy rivers, any Scion of the Devas may use the river as a Passage by entering its waters, submerging herself in its depths, and by spending a point of Legend.

Rituals: The common practice for Hindus is to cremate the body of the deceased. Once cremated, those family members and friends who were close to the person usually undergo a number of cleansing baths and purification rituals. Any Scion who bathes with a grieving family in these baths can find passage to the Underworld.

Times: There is one time in which the Underworld is open to travelers. A single feast day is given to Yama every year (unlike the numerous festivals and celebration days to the more popular Gods, such as Ganesha or Vishnu). On the first

day of Diwali, the Hindu festival of lights is Yamadeepdaan, where lanterns are hung throughout the night in honor of Yama. While these lanterns are lit, any Scion who stands in the light of one of these lanterns may find access to Naraka.

Mount Meru: The Home of the Devas

AKA: Sumeru, Hemadri, Deva-parvata

Mount Meru is unique among the Godrealms for one reason: Rather than merely an Overwold, a distant realm removed from much of creation by magical and metaphysical demarcations, the Devas' Godrealm is the exact *center* of the World, the formative core of existence. The Devas, who spend much of their time in and around the World, have chosen Mount Meru as their home because they require the proximity to their creations and their followers. Besides, when you have so much invested in something, why not keep as close an eye as possible on it?

Gods love to sit on high peaks and gaze down on their followers, and Meru is no exception. Standing 160,000 leagues high, the peak of this mountain is high enough to reach the end of the cosmos, just barely touching the shell of Brahmanda, the egg of Creation that houses the World and the firmaments of existence within its shell. Mount Meru represents the exact center of the World and the symbolic home of the Gods, but the term also encompasses all of the areas surrounding the summit. Together, this compilation of mountains, valleys, forests and oceans is the abode of the Devas, an Overworld stuck in the World.

Axis Mundi: The Ganges River

It might appear odd that one place would serve as the gateway to three realms (the Underworld, the World and Godrealm), but the Ganges River is a celestial exception to all the rules. As the holiest river of the Devas, as well as a minor deity herself, the Ganges River is almost as central to the Hindu culture as Mount Meru is to the World. Depending on how it is used, the Ganges can take a Scion throughout the cosmos, but it can be a difficult area to traverse.

The Ganges River begins in the Himalayas, at the confluence of the Bhagirathi and the Alaknanda rivers, formed from the runoff of snow from the peaks of the mountain range. Travelling through the eastern part of India, it empties into the Bay of Bengal. Many cities and villages reside on its banks and act as pilgrimage points for Hindu followers, some using its waters to cleanse their sins and wounds, while others have their ashes spread within its waters so they may be washed upriver to Mount Meru.

Depending on their destination, the Scion of the Devas may use the Ganges River as a conduit to either the Underworld or the Godrealm. As listed earlier (p. 190), the river is a Passage to the Underworld when a Scion submerges themselves in the river's depths and spends a point of Legend. The process for reaching the Overworld, however, is a little more complicated. First, the Scion must swim upstream for over a mile in intense concentration upon a sacred idea, either expounding upon a sacred expression or focusing on the true image of their divine parent. This is not an easy trek, as any significant distraction will break the Scion's though process and the connection with Mount Meru can be lost. After this feat, the Scion must dive to the river's bottom and touch it. When they re-emerge, they are at the base of Mount Meru.

Many other rivers are used as Axes Mundi by the Devas to reach their Godrealm. Some Gods simply carry a bottle of water from the Ganges with them and use a creek or canal as their axis when travelling to India is not convenient. Others claim that any river that is sacred to a group of people is enough to reach Meru. They still go through the same process regardless of the circumstance, but with varying degrees of success.

Up the Down Stream

Utilizing the same location as a portal to both the Underworld and Overworld may seem confusing and a little convoluted. But the Devas have devised this system for a reason: They have more experience with the Titans than the other pantheons and have been anticipating the Siege for millennia. Knowing that the cosmic egg can be fragile, they use the Ganges as a first line of defense against the voracious uprising of the Titans and their spawn. Besides, knowing the location of an Axis Mundi is one thing; using it correctly is another. The odds are good that any titanspawn attempting to reach Mount Meru would instead get transported back to the Underworld – back to where they came from. That is, unless someone taught them the secret of the Ganges.

The Ocean of Milk

After breaking the surface of the holy river, the Scion finds himself in the primordial ocean at the base of Mount Meru. Ksheerasagar, the ocean of milk, swirls and bubbles on one side of the mountain, its thick liquid brimming with primal energy and formative life. The ocean is almost as long as Mount Meru is high, with unfathomable depths and millions of islands. Schools of infant chukwa swim in groups from island to island, some submerging for centuries, others drinking in the milk and growing larger with each swallow.

On the horizon, a dark shadow looms over the milky waters. The original Chukwa swims in long, silent strides, the elephant Maha-pudma standing firmly on its shell, the World spinning on the elephant's back. The ebb and flow of the ocean's waves come from the rhythm of Chukwa's strokes, whose massive strength can be felt from the furthest reaches of Ksheerasagar. An enterprising Scion may attempt to get near this tortoise, but only the strongest of heroes could withstand the gale force wind of the tortoise's flippers, the sonic boom of its swimming legs and the heavy wall of dense liquid that is pushed with steady ease away from the creature.

The islands that pepper the white ocean are filled with exotic creatures and vegetation, many of which appear to be in the early stages of development. Newly formed beasts, budding flowers, precious larvae and other natural experiments abound on these islands. Some of these creations are birthed from Brahma, who dreams these things up in his spare time. Others are the form of newly made souls ready to enter the World for the first time, awaiting the crucial moment of life and existence. Still others are early prototypes of future things, the first crack at evolutionary forces before being released in the wilderness of the World.

Kailasa

Jutting from the base of Mount Meru and forming one of the sides of Mount Meru is Kailasa, the ancient home of Shiva and his family. While much of this part of the mountain is forested, it is not maintained in any logical way. Instead, the ravages of the jungle environment run rampant in all directions, up the side of the mountain, and almost into the home of the God. Wicked, ravenous creatures slither and cavort throughout the dark undergrowth, and all sorts of nemean birds and beasts wander through the leaves and branches of the tops of the trees. Parts of the forest are cleared away, many through violent means, as if a rampaging force had swept away all life in a tantrum. Dark hovels of ghosts and demons populate the deepest and thickest parts of this forest, and gangs of wretched animals, goblins and other hideous things wage battle in the thickest brushes and brambles. For Shiva, this is paradise: destruction, anger, wilderness and the harshest extremes of survival. During his many arguments with his wife, Parvati, Shiva spends his time in these woods, enduring the tortuous life of an ascetic.

As the spire of Kailasa reaches further and further up Mount Meru's side, the air around it grows thin. Clouds and mist form near the top, filling more of the air with its substance. At the very top of the peak, balancing on a cloud, is Shiva's abode, a dark, foreboding palace. The outer walls are grey and uninviting. The windows are shuttered and no light peeks through. Large, vicious birds of prey sit on the roof and windowsills, eyeing passersby with suspicion. Inside the palace, small, suffocating hallways wind throughout the floors like clogged veins. Closed doors line these hallways, many locked, some filled with junk, others completely empty. A few chambers and chasms appear in sudden moments as you wander these halls. Although they are dark and usually humid, they are a welcome change of pace from the cramped environs. At certain times during the day, these chambers are filled with Shiva's followers dancing in violent strains to stark symphonic music. The dancing bleeds into the hallways, cluttering up the corridors throughout the palace even more like cholesterol in a clotted arteries. The entire palace feels suffocated and desperate, waiting to burst in a frenetic expulsion of heavy breathing. If a Scion visits Shiva's home at just the right time, he may be swept up in this frenzy for days or even months before being expunged into the forest's dark maw, followed in short order by Shiva and Kali as they make their way down Meru's side and into the World for more destruction.

Despite its massive size, Kailasa feels cramped not only from the crowded passageways littered with Shiva's devotees, but also from the egos of the many Gods that reside within inside. The first large room near the entrance is Ganesha's library, a labyrinth within the maze. Rows upon rows of moldy tomes and fraying books line shelves as tall as bunyan trees. Legends claim that all the knowledge of the World is stored somewhere in those books, and while Ganesha has read most of the books, there are entire rows within the stacks that even he is not aware of (but he would never admit to that, of course). In small corners of this library are laboratories and experiments, globes, unraveled scrolls, half-finished manuscripts and ancient texts long forgotten by mortals, all clustered around mounds of snacks and drinks for Ganesha, treats to entice him back to his incomplete masterpieces and works-in-progress.

At the other end of the palace sits Kali's foyer, a large expanse of bare stone and dirt devoid of anything but Kali herself. Here she spins her eternal dance, a furious and hateful courant. Dirt churns and dust flies as Kali continues with her dirge, spinning and cavorting around in her cavernous hall for eternity. In the midst of her dance, Kali whips out bulbous spurts of blood that stain the walls and ceiling. Few visitors enter this chamber during her ritual, even Shiva or Parvati, who know the full danger of interrupting their daughter in the midst of her dance

Deep within the palace of Shiva rest the marital chambers of Shiva and Parvati. Simply adorned and lightly decorated, these rooms are elegant and courtly, yet beautiful. One room contains the marital bed shared by Shiva and Parvati. Off to one side is the entrance to Parvati's bathing area, a hollow chamber filled with amrita bathing waters. Parvati spends much time in the tranquil baths – whose area is about the size of a small lake – and does not grant access to anyone but her son, Ganesha, who is known to guard the doorway from unwanted visitors (especially Shiva). During the best of times, the marriage chamber of these Gods hums with blessings and pleasantries. Other times, the halls reverberate with vicious arguments and violent exchanges, often leading to an angry Shiva leaving the palace in shambles as he goes to his forest for reflection. This, of course, suits Parvati just fine, as she can spend the time reflecting in her tranquil baths.

Vaikuntha

On the other side of Mount Meru rests Vaikuntha, the heavenly paradise of Vishnu and Lakshmi. Running down the length of the mountain, Vaikuntha is an ornate palace made entirely of gold, its towers and palisades adorned with ornate jewels, its pools filled with amrita, honey and the crystalline waters of ritual cleansing. The circumference of the palace is 80,000 miles, and innumerable spires, towers, buildings and courtyards fill its confines.

In the middle of Vaikuntha sits a giant jambu tree, which grows so high that it casts a protective shadow over the World and the lower areas of Mount Meru. The fruit of this tree is as big as an elephant, sweet in flavor and irresistible to most mortals' palettes. When the fruit ripens, it falls down

the mountain and into the milky ocean beneath, mixing with the waters to create the sweet succor of existence. Some of the fruit falls in the courtyard, spilling its juice outward and down the other side of the mountain, forming a river of sweet liquid. This river is a hotbed of amrita, and checks to detect even the most potent levels of the divine liquid are half (rounded down) as difficult to accomplish as normal.

Flowing through the palace are the divine origins of the Ganges River. Dripping from the clouds that linger in the midst of the palace, the pure droplets of rain falls down on the jambu tree, giving it life. Runoff from this precipitation moves down the courtyard, flowing through the mountainside and emptying into Ksheerasagar. Mixing with the primordial waters, the Ganges flows further down the roots of Mount Meru and into the World, where it continues its journey past the Himalayas and into India proper.

The central building of Vaikuntha is surprisingly small and simple compared to the rest of Vishnu's paradise. A tall building unadorned with any jewels sits to one side of the palace. Inside are warm and receptive banquet halls, gathering places for the blessed and chosen followers of Vishnu. These halls are designed for the culmination of earthly pleasure and enticement for the good and just and devoted Hindus. Sweet music fills the chambers, savory fragrances linger and tantalize, while heaping plates of food and drink filter in and out of the great kitchens and feasting tables for untold years as they chosen followers enjoy their brief respite in paradise. At the head of the banquet sits Vishnu and Lakshmi on golden thrones, hand in hand and with loving smiles on their faces, watching over the festivities and ushering in ever increasing aspects of delight.

The rest of Vaikuntha is devoted to the various avatars of Vishnu, his reincarnations dwelling among its spires, copies of his generosity and perseverance filling Vishnu's abode with his indomitable spirit. All past and future incarnations take their place in this palace, some more prominent than others. The heroes Rama and Krishna, both celebrated aspects of Vishnu in the World, are the most visible forms of Vishnu in this building, often meeting with guests and sharing stories of heroic deeds and vanquished foes. Other avatars, like Kalki and Vamana, are more uncommon presences, their quiet nature or humble spirit refining them to the modest places and tranquil spires of Vaikantha.

Svarga

Below Vaikantha, near the base of the mountain, rests the ancient home of Indra, called Svarga. Sitting directly above a luscious valley of verdant fields, Svarga is the most welcoming abode of all the Gods of the Devas. Indra's home is 80 miles in circumference and 40 miles high; its pillars are diamonds and the furniture is made of gold. In the back of the palace is Indra's orchard, a marvelous clearing that bleeds out into the valley below. Throughout this orchard are tall, fragrant trees and bountiful gardens, perfect areas for rest and relaxation. As one of the oldest of the Gods, Indra spends a lot of his time in this garden, long since retired from many of his battles as a fierce warrior. He prefers the tranquility of his trees and the placid winds that blow through the grasses to the ubiquitous and unending battles against Vritra.

For many of the worshippers of the Devas, Svarga was the most sought after destination for a life after death. His home was comfort for the restless, a salve for the wounded and the most pleasant experience for the soul during their wanderings in Samsara. The orchard and valley were filled with satiated souls strolling through its greenery or conversing in the shade, taking in the sweet-smelling fruits and flowers. Inside, the numerous antechambers, foyers and sitting rooms entertained countless guests and followers, each one of them lounging about in satiated pleasure. Svarga was the paradise for the common folk, the unremarkable but devout worshippers of the Devas.

Nowadays, however, Indra's palace is mostly empty. He has some visitors, to be sure, but nowhere near the number of souls awaiting entrance to his palace like in the good old days. As he walks around his palace and the empty hallways and rooms filled with relics from his past, he sings softly to himself. Every once in a while, Indra engages with his visitors and tells them stories of his accomplishments, showing off his collection to whoever will listen. Many of the rooms of his great palace are sealed off from visitors, closed for centuries due to lack of interest or purpose. He still steps inside them from time to time, reliving the stories behind his antiques. No other soul has had access to those rooms for almost a millennium. Despite his growing age and lack of influence among the other Devas, Indra continues to collect and fill these rooms, sometimes using items and creatures from the other Gods who have no use for some of the stuff. But being a keen collector, Indra has a purpose for everything and knows a good deal when he sees one. There's no telling what he hides in his treasure rooms, the long-sealed caverns of mystery and pleasure.

Vaivasvati

Near the peak of Mount Meru is the home of Surya. Vaivasvati is a brilliant white palace situated at one of the highest points of the mountain. With only a few towers and a much smaller sized home than some of the other Gods (Surya's palace is only a few miles in circumference), Vaivasvati is a surprisingly humble home for one of the most prestigious Gods of the Devas. That humility is only skin-deep, however, as Surya's palace is also the most ancient and powerful of all the other Gods. Inside his walls, Surya holds the sun and light itself. Some of the lesser (and more jealous) of the Devas accuse Surya of hording the sun, sequestering it within his walls during the night. But to Surya, he is completely fair about sharing his precious orb; in fact, he is so generous that he makes sure to ride with it in his chariot throughout the day to ensure that everyone can see it in all of its splendor.

Besides the precious sun that Surya stores in his home, the other important aspect of Vaivasvati are his herds of horses and splendid chariots. In the expanses outside of his palace, Surya tends a few thousand horses in his massive stables. Each of the horses are models of perfect breeding; Surya's herd is renowned throughout the Godrealms as being among the best (if not the best) of all the Gods,

and he treats his herd like a doting father. Thousands of servants groom and train the horses daily, feeding them oats sown from sacrificial offerings to Surya, as well as heaping gallons of amrita. In his stables, Surya also keeps about one thousand chariots, enough for him to ride one a day without ever having to drive the same chariot in a year.

WHAT ABOUT AGNI?

Careful readers may notice that Agni does not have any heavenly abode of his own. That is not a coincidence. As the messenger of the Gods, Agni is too busy acting as a conduit between the World and the Gods to really have much of a home. Instead, Agni resides in *every* home, regardless of its celestial location. Many followers of the Devas treat Agni as a permanent guest in their home, forever there to act as mediator between mortals and the divine. Thus, Agni has the greatest of all the Godly homes: every home.

Brahmaloka

At the very top of Mount Meru, situated on its highest peak, is Brahmaloka, the home of Brahma and Sarasvati. Perfectly balanced on the mountain's point, this heavenly abode is a squat, square bungalow with few adornments or decorations, despite being nearly 800 miles in diameter. Brahamaloka is separated into a number of equal sections. At the front of the home is Brahma's bestiary, a large domain where every creature and thing conceived by Brahma resides. As the creator of the World and its occupants, Brahmas keeps his creations in his home as a reminder of the goodness that he has wrought. Every plant, flower, bird, beast, demon, bacteria and other living thing that sprang from the perpetual mind of Brahma has a place within this area of Brahma-loka.

The second part of this heavenly dwelling is Satyaloka, the abode of truth. Walled off from the fruits of creation, this realm within Brahmaloka is an empty and mysterious place, accessible only to Brahma. Trapped inside Satyaloka is truth in its absolute form. It is here that Brahma spends most of his existence, bathing in the absolute expression of truth in its purest form, completely lost in thought and meditation. At certain times in the history of the Devas, Brahma has spent millennia in this chamber, absorbing its energy and expressions, only to re-emerge from its chambers imbued with the fire and insight of total Creation. After the imprisonment of the Titans, Brahma lived in here for 3,000 years readying the World for another incarnation without Titanic influences. Nowadays, he again has locked himself in this section, for longer periods than in the past. But for what purpose is anybody's guess.

The third division is Maharloka, the middle region, the heart of Brahmaloka. This area is reserved for all the souls who led completely untarnished and pure existences in the World. They are the liberated individuals, the souls who have experienced moksha and have escaped forever the shackles of Samsara. Experiencing the fullness and vibrancy of life, these lucky souls have removed themselves entirely from the physical world and can now sit in complete meditation with Brahma outside of the clutches of material existence. To these souls, Fate is no longer a force to influence their daily lives, and with this comforting fact can they sit in complete meditation on the spiritual aspects of the cosmos.

The final division of Brahmaloka is Tapoloka, the quiet, domestic part of Brahma's home. Situated in this area is Sarasvati, their marital chambers, and the devoted followers of Brahma who have not made it into Maharloka. On those nights when Brahma removes himself from his meditations, contemplations and creation sessions, he sits quietly at home with his wife, talking with the ascetics, wondrous creatures and other divine beings. It is a very rare occasion that Brahma experiences this domestic lifestyle, but his loving and patient wife is always prepared to be there by his side.

AFTER THE SIEGE: A MOUNTAIN THIRSTS

With the release of the Titans upon the Godrealms, Mount Meru lost one of its most striking features: its fertility. The ocean of milk that served as its base is barely a puddle. Chukwa continues his steady voyage throughout the sea, but his route is shortened by a lack of available space. The islands in the sea are arid and barren, and the empty shells of lesser chukwas litter the coarse ground like errant pebbles on the sand. Shiva's forest is no longer a vibrant green, but a putrid brown, and Kali's anger has burned wider swaths into the jungles. Surya's herd has dwindled in numbers, totally only a quarter of its peak size. Only Brahma's bestiary remains verdant, although Brahma's extended stay in Satyaloka has worried the rest of the Devas, who have resorted to infighting and bickering.

The worst aspect of this dry spell is the absence of amrita, the substance of immortality. Rumors among the Gods abound that Vritra and his spawn have been targeting the substance in all the celestial liquids and have even found more success in detecting the liquid than even the Gods. Pretty soon, the Gods fear that they might lose a major source of their immortality. Their only solace is that the mighty Ganges is still flowing, but for how long is anybody's guess.

Titan: Vritra–Drought

AKA: Ahi, Enveloper, The Blocker, The Great Thirst, The Dragon

In the minds and hearts of the Devas, nothing is more deadly to everything they hold true than Vritra. Where they are the first swallow of water after a long battle, he is the last gasp of empty lungs from a dying warrior. The Devas effuse life like the Ganges River itself and Vritra greedily drinks life until there is nothing left. Vritra is never sated.

This Titan is the desiccated shell of a long-dead beetle, the baking sun on a cracked, dried riverbed. Nothing escapes its sight, nothing escapes its thirst. Kali represents rebirth through destruction—the beneficial rebirth that the Devas adhere to. Vritra represents an end to life that operates outside of this order—the reduction of everything into a cavernous, gluttonous stomach.

Vritra is known as the Great Thirst because it represents all that are wanting: greed, self-preservation, destruction. Wise mortals did not venture far into the desert because they knew the madness that such thirst brings—an all-consuming and unquenchable thirst that trumps all other feelings and turns a man into a shadow of himself. Life cannot exist in such an environment for long

Whatever Vritra comes in contact diminishes both physically and spiritual from its mere presence, such is the extent of the Enveloper's greed for life. An undeniable force, Vritra was never truly imprisoned like many other Titans. Instead it retreated into itself, its mountain sized body diminishing after being defeated and retreating into a form so small it escaped the notice of the Gods themselves. Burrowing deep back within the earth, Vritra inevitably begins its feeding ritual again as the land above replenishes from its previous gorging.

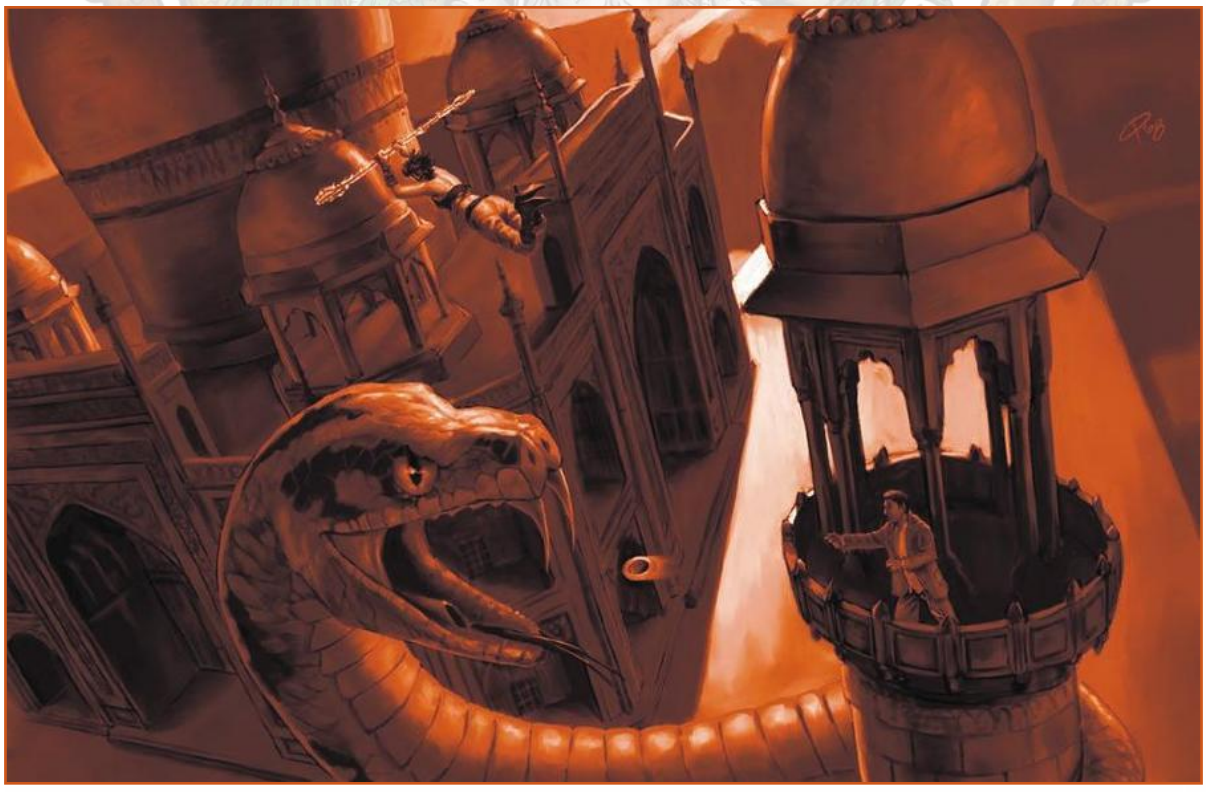
The Devas are just beginning to hear tidings of his return: increased sightings of rakhashas, a terrible drought in an unusual place and sacred trees beginning to whither and die. Wherever Vritra's vast body slithers its blood, the extracted and polluted excrement of whatever he consumes, oozes out of its body and sometimes turns into an offspring, the only "creation" of Vritra.

Favored Purviews: Chaos, Death, Earth, Sun

Banned Purviews: Health, Water

Prominent Features

No matter where within Vritra one travels, they feel the great thirst literally pulling at every bit of liquid in their bodies. It is a (Damage 15L/action, Trauma 6L) threat. The innards of The Enveloper are bright and dry, like the harshest desert. There are no shadows and everything is almost bone-white, like the remains of a vulture's prey that have been sitting, untouched, on a high sandy dune. At the same time, the



THE SUHKESE TEMPLATE

All creatures that were unfortunate enough to find their way into Vritra's parched mouth that have not yet had the life drained from them possess this template. Creatures with this template are near death by a magical form of dehydration. Their skin is pulled tight across their bones, their muscles hardened and stiff and their will is as strong as their thirst.

Each creature with this template gains an additional soak (4B/2L/2A) versus all types of damage, as the tissues surrounding each wound have been without water for long enough to dull the pain of any incoming strike. The blood of these creatures, now mixing with the dark sludge that is Vritra's blood, flows less freely and is at a near crawl, allowing them to take considerable damage without noticing. Creature with the Sukhese template convert two -2 health levels into -1 health levels, as well as one -4 level into a -2 level.

When wounded, creatures with this template emit a foul smelling dust that magically sucks all moisture from the vicinity. Well-watered plants wither, puddles evaporate, and even the most torrential rain is interrupted. The ichor that flows within Scions is more resilient, but is slowed as well, causing each character within ten feet of an open wound to suffer a -3 Dexterity penalty for as long as they are within the space. If they manage to bring themselves outside of this manifestation of thirst, the effect lasts for 2 turns until the ichor no longer feels the horrific pull of Vritra's blood.

Suhkese creatures are especially susceptible to Boons from the Water purview, for water to them has become a nearly unrecognizable element. Water-related boons, effects and the like gain an additional bonus to their dice pool equal to the number of dots of their power. For example, a three dot Water Boon gains three extra dice to its roll, as does a four dot Creature who uses a water-based attack on the Sukhese titanspawn. However, creatures using Sun or Fire Boons against the Sukhese suffer the opposite effect, losing dice from their pool equal to that particular power's number of dots. Both the sun and fire work aggressively to feed Vritra's droughts, and using these powers against the Sukhese creatures is practically moot.

The Sukhese react against amrita as titanspawn, albeit in a more subdued manner. Instead of the lethal damage per dot per cup, the damage to Sukhese titanspawn is merely one bashing level per cup, regardless of potency. However, this does not stop the Sukhese from obtaining and hording the divine liquid. Part of Vritra's mission is to collect all the amrita for himself and destroy it, removing divinity from the Gods. Therefore, his followers actively seek out amrita for their Titan, hoping to satiate his thirst for the liquid. Chances are, wherever amrita exists, a Sukhese titanspawn is likely nearby.

space feels constricted, the product of water being completely absent from the air. Those treading the sandy ground inside Vritra feel a terrible pull at their insides. Even those with the strongest ichor experience a burning within their body, as if their blood is being consumed from the inside out.

Little life exists in Vritra—perhaps there's an occasional Asura wandering around in pain or a rakshasa being born. The most frequent sight in the vast desert of Vritra is the remnants of the unlucky. Not an ounce of flesh lasts long in the unrelenting heat and the mind-crushing drought. Only those with the most physical and mental fortitude can survive a journey more taxing than crossing a thousand deserts. The brain of nearly any living thing cannot handle the dehydration and dementia which sets in almost immediately upon being surrounded by the Enveloper.

Occasionally a ruined fortress of worn white stone juts out of the shifting sands, imposing on those that tread within Vritra like a retreating, dusty glacier. There are ninety-nine such fortresses that were destroyed by Indra in battle before the Devas' greatest victory. Originally strongholds of Vritra, it enveloped them upon its defeat and now they sit as a testament to Vritra's determined hunger. Many of those that dare to fight Vritra have sought refuge from the conditions within their bare walls, only to find a long, slow death of unnatural exposure.

Even the most skilled observer cannot recognize direction within Vritra, but those treading inside feel as if they are slowly being pulled toward something. This is the inevitable thirst of Vritra, everything near it and inside it is dragged, inexorably, towards its stomach. The Devas know that those trapped within Vritra seldom survive, as the Dragon is an engine of drought. The Enveloper's being brings on the greatest madness and overcomes even the most determined adversary. Eventually, the realization of inevitable consumption strikes the bravest of Vritra's foes once they find themselves inside.

This is why the Devas typically proceed with one of two tactics. Either attack Vritra externally, slashing deep into its belly with their most powerful weapons and full might, or they spend many months in the deepest meditation in preparation for the trip inside. Even then, those that breach Vritra's exterior find themselves ill-prepared for the true panic of the Thirst that awaits them. It is a hunger that was able to drink the waters from the whole of creation until Indra freed them in battle.

Sample Passages

There are two ways to find one's way into Vritra. In the World, one must travel far enough into the desert to be on the brink of death. Starvation, hunger, weakness all give way to Vritra's powerful, crooked maw and she who sought Vritra will unfortunately find it.

The second way is for a Scion to find a dry creek bed or the hottest noon sun and purposefully unleash some of their ichorous blood onto the thirsty ground. When enough blood has evaporated in such intense, thirsty heat, Vritra will come and swallow the traveler whole, thrusting them into a pain unimaginable and an environment foreign to the realms of mortals and Gods alike. Vritra will only come for those of great enough Legend, as the ichor itself calls to the Enveloper in a way that is undeniable.

Dānu
aka: the Water-Mother

Perhaps the most dangerous aspect of Vritra is the incarnation of she who birthed it. While the timeline may become confused at this point, it is clear to the Devas that there exists an aspect of the Blocker that might have come before it. The stories of the original Devas have been passed down of a being whom is water incarnate, the very essence of rain and liquid. More fertile than the legendary Ganges, she eventually birthed Vritra one terrible portentous day as the noon sun shown down upon her naked body. As she first nursed her child, a great serpent the likes of which she had never seen, she began to understand its nature.

Instead of feeling shame or disgust at her creation, she grew increasingly maddened as her maternal instincts took over. She would provide for it no matter the costs. Slavishly loyal to her offspring, she was also the first victim of its consumption. Even while she withered away in Vritra's belly, she felt a solace in nurturing it with her body.

As the story goes, Vritra sometimes unconsciously takes on her form to honor her as the Enveloper's original and most satisfying meal. As Dānu, Vritra plays the part of a nurturing figure, luring potential meals into its arms before reverting to a truer form and devouring them. This disguise is the one true aspect of Vritra that can fool even the most discerning Gods. Something as primal as motherly love hearkens back to the basest nature of those seeking approval—they are willing to ignore the crazed eyes and parched lips of Dānu as she thirsts for their ichor.

Typically Dānu appears dressed in long, tight white robes, her skin pulled back across her frame and her cheeks high and gaunt. With her dark hair tight against her skull she plays the role of supreme matron. Those looking upon her feel the weight of judgment in her eyes which triggers shame instead of the panic that it should.

Ravana
aka: Dashakantham, Ravan

Vritra's war on the Devas is not only a one-against-many battle. As a divine power, Vritra also begets offspring. Once a God himself, Ravana was consumed as the aspect which births the Enveloper's army—the rakshasas. His soul corrupted,

DANU, DÁNU

The Tuatha dé Danaan contains a Goddess very similar to the Titanic aspect of drought. Are these two related? One is the Irish Goddess of fertile waters, while the other is associated with the primordial waters as well. This is a point of contention between the Devas and the Tuatha, and many Devas cast a wary eye upon Dānu and her Scions.

Ravana preformed austerities to Brahma for several years and gained great power in the process.

This epitome of aggressiveness and testosterone has several wives but most importantly a harem filled with prisoners from his various martial conquests. With them he sires the rakshasas through violent, insatiable couplings.

Rakshasas

From Ravana, the horrific, shapeshifting near-humans known as rakshasa are born. Their blood is mixed with the faintest corruption of Vritra—a sort of anti-ichor running through their veins. They each have the all-consuming thirst of Vritra calling out to them from deep within, and the Ravana's aggression makes them the consummate warriors.

They each carry the Sukhese template (see the sidebar on p. 196). While they can shapeshift into anything vaguely human, changing their appearance almost at will or adapting animal characteristics, there are certain clues that give them away—especially to their adversaries.

They are driven mad by ichor. After being in its presence for less than a minute, they must tear through whatever stands in their way (usually a Scion's flesh) to get it and drink from it. Rakshasas also have very dry skin. Usually they wear thick clothing to obscure their faces and arms as much as possible to better blend in. Finally, they breathe deeper than normal, wheezing because inside they are nearly completely devoid of liquid. They typically take on aspects of tigers, viewing them as animals of great power.

Rakshasas carry the stats of whatever animal they choose. They are fickle creatures, and often change shape multiple times in a battle in order to confuse and delude their enemies. Their natural form is virtually unknown, as no two rakshasa are even seen alike. But a common form of these creatures is that of a giant with a tiger's head. Whatever their form, the rakshasa are fierce creatures of Legend. When creating these titanspawn as adversaries, use any of the non-aquatic animal templates found in **Scion: Hero** pp. 328-332, and then add the Sukhese template and the following stats:

Attributes: Strength +1, Dexterity +2, Manipulation +2, Appearance +1, Intelligence -2, Wits -1

Abilities: Animal Ken +2, Athletics +1, Brawl +2, Fortitude +2, Melee +2, Stealth +2, Thrown +1

Virtues: Ambition 4, Malice 4, Rapacity 2, Zealotry 2

Supernatural Powers:

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength +2 (Holy Bound, Knockback Attack), Epic Dexterity +2 (Cat's Grace, Untouchable Opponent), Epic Stamina +1 (Self-Healing), Epic Appearance +1 (Dreadful Mien)

*Boons***:** Warrior Ideal, Battle Cry, Heavenly Flare, Shaping, Unquiet Corpse, Flare Missile, Summon Ghost, Hornet's Nest, Fire Immunity

Cannibalize: By eating the flesh of a Scion, the rakshasa drains the ichor from the Scion's veins, gorging it into his unholy self. For every level of lethal damage dealt to a Scion through their bite, the Scion loses two Legend points while the rakshasa gains one. The rakshasa will continue to drain the ichor from the Scion's body until none remains. While in the biting stage, however, the rakshasa has -2 to its DV, because it is distracted by the engorging.

Shapeshift: A rakshasa may take the form of any creature of equal or lesser Legend. Generally, though, it prefers to take nemean forms of common animals, or even simply the animal form with a Sukhese appearance. Shapeshifting in battle is a Speed 6 action and requires an expenditure of two Legend points.

Join Battle: Varies

Attacks: Varies, but one common attack, whatever the form.

Bite- Accuracy 12, Damage 10L, Parry-, Speed 5

Soak: Varies, but carries the +4B/+2L/+2A from the Sukhese template

Health Level: -0 -0 -0 -0 -1 -1 -1 -1 -1 -2 -2 -2 -2 -4 -4 -4 Inc.

Dodge DV: **Willpower**: 8

Legend: 5 **Legend Points:** 25

Trophy: A rakshasa's corpse carries the effects of the Sukhese template above. If a Scion chooses to investigate its body, he may attempt a roll to discover amrita within its corpse. There is rarely any amrita above 3 dots in the veins of the rakshasa, but some lower level amrita can be found, especially in older rakshasa or ones deep in a mission from Ravana.

Nagas

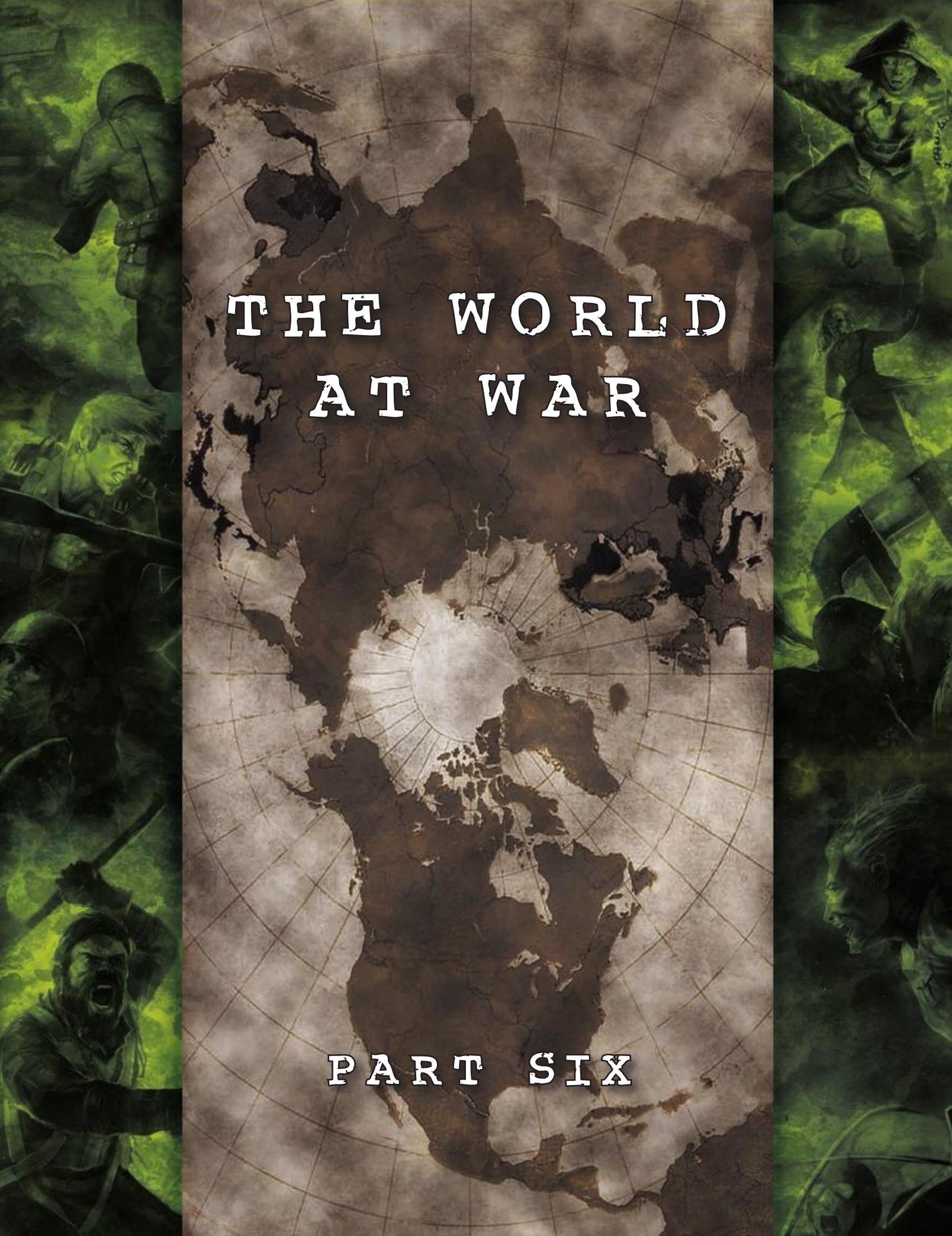
Apart from the rakshasas, the basest offspring of Vritra are the nagas, which come directly from the Enveloper's flesh as it molts its skin in long swaths which wriggle and condense into manifestations of chaos. Dangerous, human sized snake-men, their savage nature has caused the bravest Scion to turn and run.

Nagas are close in relation to the nagaraja (**Scion: God** pp. 322-3). In fact, they are another creature of Muspelheim, the Titan of Fire. However, the naga (and some nagaraja) feel more affinity with Vritra, and since the release of the Titans have begun joining the fight under the Titan of Drought's banner. Whispers among the titanspawn portray the nagaraja as creatures stolen from Vritra, and that this theft is a growing split between the Titans of fire and drought. Other whispers denote a more ancient secret that Muspelheim is itself an aspect of Vritra. Whatever the case, the naga are a common creature among Vritra's aspects, and a sinister one to boot.

Nagas share the same stats as nagaraja, with a few adjustments. They are the human form of these creatures, the true serpent kings, and giants to boot. Use the nagaraja as a template for the naga, with the following exceptions:

- The nagas have a Dexterity of 10 and Charisma 5.
- Add two dots Epic Dexterity and Epic Strength (as well as the Anti-Gravity Climber and Disfiguring Attack Knacks).
- Nagas have Legend 9, and all the dots of Fire, Earth and Sun through the eighth dot.

They usually carry the weapons similar to the Devas, especially bagh-nakhs and giant war clubs (Accuracy 15, Damage 30B, Parry 35, Speed 6). Nagas trophies contain only one eye instead of both (at the Storyteller's discretion).


THE WORLD AT WAR
PART SIX

Normandy. June 6, 1944: O-Dark-Hundred

There wasn't much of a wall between Lt. Sam Washington and the German machine-gun to begin with, and the rounds were rapidly chewing it up in pluming red sprays of brick dust. Somewhere in the dark, a cannon boomed loudly enough to bounce the pebbles near Washington's hand. It was the noise of the war that got to men, he knew. There was no way to explain it, no way to really simulate it in training. It split the sky, rattled a man's teeth in his head, and rumbled his guts into water. Some soldiers shot themselves in the foot or the hand—or even the head—just to get away from it. Washington wasn't one of those. He had a mission.

Uncle Sam himself had briefed him, pointing his finger right at the lieutenant's heart and saying "I want you to find Marie and guard the Shield." Cryptic old bastard—and as if there weren't already enough to do on D-Day. But Washington wasn't about to disappoint his patron.

The lieutenant had lost his equipment satchel in his jump from the C-47, and now he had exactly ten bullets and one grenade. But he did still have his standard-issue cigarettes—all four packs—so he cupped his hand to shield his lighter while the Germans continued to waste their ammo. Two puffs later, he let fly with his grenade, flicking it up in a blind toss over the wall. One more puff, a loud bang, and the shooting stopped.

Unfortunately, the grenade had ripped up the machinegun just as much as it had the soldiers, so Washington sprinted past them to take cover behind a wrecked half-track. The tank was still fifty yards ahead, parked amidst a cloud of grey-clad soldiers hustling in and out of an old abbey. All around, howitzers, grenades, bombs and rifles thundered so loudly that they made the night air seem as thick as water.

He dashed in, keeping the abbey between him and the panzer. But by the time he hopped the low stone fence into the overgrown abbey grounds, he could hear the tank shift into gear and speed away with the troopers falling in after it. Still, there was some kind of commotion within, so he raised his machine gun to shoulder level and kicked in the abbey's back door.

Washington put three rounds into the first Nazi's back and three more into the other's chest. They seemed to be the only ones there, except for the young woman they had cornered. Pretty, was his first thought. That was about all the time he could spare for thinking, because the soldiers he had just riddled with bullets were doing a lousy job of dying. One on the floor swung his rifle around, but the girl produced a pistol and shot him in the head. The other jumped Washington, howling and snapping at his throat. Washington noticed the teeth right away: they were pointy and glittering, like miniature, gnarled icicles. With his face shoved so close, Washington could now also see that the Nazi's hair, eyes and eyebrows were powdered white, as though coated with hoarfrost.

Creating some space with a swift kick, the lieutenant put another two rounds into his enemy at point blank, which only seemed to make him angry. So he put another three rounds in, and then another two, and four more after that. Finally, the Nazi lay still and Washington looked at his Thompson, wondering how he hadn't run out of ammo when he'd started with a third of a clip.

"I gave you bullets so you could continue shooting," the girl answered his unspoken question in a thin French accent. Washington knew what she meant: she was a Scion, too.

"Neat trick," he said. "You must be Marie?"

"Oui. And you are Lieutenant Samuel Washington of the one-oh-one?" She pronounced each syllable deliberately. "I have been told to expect your help."

Washington realized that he had lost his cigarette, so he pulled another from his pack. The girl eyed it desperately, so he shook out one more and flicked it to her.

"What's all this about a shield?" he asked as he held out his lighter.

"The shield belonged to Jeanne d'Arc." She took a long, deep drag and blew the smoke out with her words. "They have it now, in their tank. They are taking it to Loki, for the Axis War. You were too late to help."

"Listen, lady, don't be an ingrate." He slung one of the German rifles over his shoulder and began pilfering ammunition from the dead soldiers. "We're here to save your country, you know."

"Just as we saved yours in, when was it? 1776?"

"I don't need a history lesson from you."

"No, perhaps just a lesson in manners." She blew smoke through a haughty smile.

"You want another smoke? Ever?" He glared at her until the smirk faded from her lips. When it did, he tossed her a full, unopened cigarette pack. "There's a good girl. Now, how about you tell me the story on our friends here." He nudged one of the fallen soldiers, whose hair and teeth were melting into little puddles on the wooden floorboards.

"They make them," Marie said with a shudder of abhorrence. "Some kind of serum—I don't fully understand."

"I'd hate to fight an army of these guys," Washington admitted.

"This is only one experiment. They are doing many unholy things. And this shield is important. But they now have it."

Washington looked at her for a long moment. His cigarette's cherry slowly ate away at the tobacco while the sounds of war raged on in the distance.

"That's good enough for me," Washington finally said, tossing her the other rifle and heading out the front door. "Let's go get that shield back."

THE HISTORY OF THE REAL WAR

World War Two was every bit as momentous and fateful an episode for the Overworld as it was for the World. The Gods, who refer to the conflict as the "Axis War," now look back on it as a catastrophic blunder. It was a time of massive destruction and widespread peril, when large numbers of Scions were called upon to prove themselves through courage, action and sacrifice. Whatever may have been true about right and wrong, victor and vanquished, Fate made one adamant decree for these years: these were to be interesting times.

WILL THERE BE A TEST ON THIS?

If you're feeling a little apprehensive about adding a historical setting to your game, we offer this simple advice: don't sweat the details. Nobody's going to test you on facts, you don't need to memorize any dates and your high school history teacher isn't going to grade your character's back-story. For most groups of players, the fun will come from establishing the feeling of the war rather than from maintaining strict historical accuracy—and it'll be a lot easier that way, too.

By the same token, this section is not meant to deliver an accurate representation of the historical war. World War Two is a vast subject which has been the focus of thousands of books, and there are simply not enough pages here to do justice to the real-life triumphs, catastrophes, heroics and horrors of the war. Furthermore, this section presents an *alternate* history—that is, history viewed through the lens of mythology. Just as when playing in a modern setting, **Scion** in the context of World War Two diverges from "real life" as we know it to follow the epic tradition, complete with heroes who perform amazing deeds, villains with supernatural powers and pointy-toothed monsters that would happily munch on any of the above.

STORM CLOUDS GATHER

As above, so below: the seeds of World War Two were sown in the scorched ground left by World War One. Whether out of concern for their people or property or a simple zeal for fighting, the Gods became extensively embroiled in mortal affairs during the so-called "War to End All Wars." Most divinities remained active in the World at least through the early 1920s, and this widespread association with mortals inevitably resulted in Scions being born in unprecedented numbers. It was these Scions who would serve on the front lines in the Axis War to come.

Scions were not the only thing to be born out of the First World War. The legends of many new nationalistic Gods had coalesced and expanded during these times. Some were Scions turned folk heroes turned divinities, but others apparently sprang into being on their own, apparently crafted from mortal imagination. The old Gods greeted the arrival of these new pantheons with perfect disinterest—all except for Loki. Loki alone conjectured that if the collective subconscious of mortals could truly bend Fate far enough to fabricate Gods, then perhaps Fate could ultimately be controlled by influencing the hearts and minds of mortals. In short, though mortals had power to write in the book of Fate, the Gods might yet dictate the story. It was a radical theory, but Loki managed to convince the rest of the Aesir that they might avoid Ragnarök by vowing to support this experiment.

Loki thought he had selected the perfect cat's-paw in Adolf Hitler, a fanatic adept at inspiring fanaticism in others. The trickster god arranged for Hitler to acquire Odin's spear Gungnir, which he presented as the Spear of Destiny. With this artifact, Hitler was able to Fatebind an ever-growing circle of supporters, revitalize his country's economy and restore Germany's national pride. Around the world, men and women standing in the unemployment lines of the Great Depression read splashy headlines about Nazi Germany's labor shortages and booming industries. Even as Jews, Gypsies, Communists and homosexuals began fleeing Nazi persecution, other people from many nations developed sympathies for the new Reich.

Loki was pleased with Hitler's rise to power and his preparation for war, but he, like the other Gods and most of the mortal world, remained ignorant of the true extent of the Führer's genocidal intentions. The Gods can be callous, but not even Loki would have condoned the Holocaust. However, in the years that followed, all the Gods were too distracted by their own battles and had no reason to suspect that such horrors were taking place. Furthermore, Hitler's use of Gungnir to drastically change the mortal world caused him to remain largely veiled from the view of the Gods by a denser and more tangled skein of Fate than had been spun before. After the war, when the secret of the Holocaust was laid bare for Gods and mortals alike, this would prove to be the greatest shame of the Axis pantheons.

While the Norse pantheon was developing the "Ultimate Reich," the Dodekatheon was also being marshaled towards imperialism, albeit under blatantly false pretenses. Caligula, a lesser God and former Roman emperor, sought to do as an immortal what he failed to accomplish as a mortal:

reclaim and expand the glory of the Roman Empire. Caligula managed to seize control of the Dodekatheon by placing Zeus into a deep slumber and then impersonating the King of Olympus. However, the pretender proved to be an ineffective leader. The other Olympians obeyed his commands out of respect for Zeus, but few were inspired to strive on behalf of his ambitions. Thus, this ordinarily august company spent most of the war years on the defensive before finally breaking apart in dissention.

The Amatsukami were far more unified in their ambitions than the Dodekatheon and even more advanced in their war plans than the Aesir. In 1937, when the Japanese invaded China, ambassadors from the Celestial Bureaucracy traveled to the court of Amaterasu to request that she exert her influence with the imperial family to withdraw troops. The sun goddess spurned their request and sent Hachiman and an army of Overworld soldiers to storm the Celestial Bureaucracy's Axis Mundi and scatter the Jade Emperor's disorganized and unprepared court. This was a shocking show of aggression; it was virtually unheard of for one pantheon to seize another's Axis Mundi and capture space within a foreign Godrealm, but it was to set the tone for the war to come.

As the Aesir, Dodekatheon, and Amatsukami began to militarize, they found that they shared many of the same enemies. In 1940, the same year that the German, Italian and Japanese governments became the "Axis" by signing the Tripartite Pact, the three aggressive pantheons also agreed to work together—or at least to stay out of each other's way. The stage was now set for the war to come.

THE CONFLAGRATION SPREADS

Gods and mortals alike call this war World War Two, but denizens of the Overworld refer to it as the Axis War. This latter name is less in reference to the axis of aggressive pantheons and more to the Gods' war strategies for capturing or destroying other pantheons' Axes Mundi. Following the example set by Hachiman in China, the three Axis pantheons initiated a campaign of invading other Godrealms through the Axes Mundi connection points in the World. Even without Titans residing in the spaces between realms, it was simply easier to transport large numbers of celestial troops through these connection points than through the Overworld. However, this often required that invading armies first capture areas in the World surrounding the connection points. Thus, while the Gods remained heavily pre-occupied with their war in the heavens, they used their Scions to influence the actions of various armies on Earth to gain access to enemy Godrealms, deny the enemy access to their own or cut off enemy forces that had already passed through. This manipulation explains some of the seeming blunders made by mortal generals on both sides: often, an all-out assault costing the lives of thousands of soldiers to claim a location with no apparent strategic value was really part of a larger strategy to take a critical Axis Mundi.

AXIS WAR TIMELINE IN BRIEF

1922: Mussolini becomes prime minister; Caligula supplants Zeus

1925: Hitler acquires Gungnir

1933: Hitler elected Chancellor of Germany

1937: Japan invades China; Amaterasu spurns the Celestial Bureaucracy

1939: Germany invades Poland; Aesir conquer existing Russian Gods

1940: Tripartite Pact signed, Germany overruns Denmark, Norway, Netherlands, Belgium, and France; Aesir subjugate several pantheons, including the French

1941: Attack on Pearl Harbor; Amatsukami attack Yankee Delegation

1942: Battle of Midway; counter-invasion of Pacific Axes Mundi

1943: Italy surrenders, Battle of Kursk; Olympus under siege, Dodekatheon divides

1944: D-Day; French pantheon liberated

1945: V-E Day, atomic bombs dropped on Japan, V-J day; Aesir surrender, Zeus returns to power, Amatsukami surrender

The Aesir may have proven the most adept at this type of warfare. They used Bifröst, the Rainbow Bridge, to transport their forces to an enemy Axis Mundi connection point and immediately smash through into the target's Godrealm. This action was usually carefully coordinated with a Nazi Blitzkrieg of the area around the Axis Mundi, cementing their territorial gains in two worlds at once. In the course of only a few months in 1940, while Germany conquered country after country, the Aesir raided nearly as many pantheons, imprisoning the Gods and impounding their Birthrights. A few Gods, particularly those of the French pantheon, escaped to the World or hid within their realms to carry on underground resistance against Aesir occupation. The current Soviet pantheon, with its vast and unwelcoming Godrealm and their bottomless tolerance for suffering, seemed to be the only group capable of holding off

the Aesir, but their losses were tremendous and Rodina Mat privately considered surrender on numerous occasions.

Amaterasu also directed her pantheon to subjugate the assorted pantheons associated with the pacific islands. The vision of both Emperor Hirohito and Amaterasu was the "Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere," which was to be a united and self-sufficient Asian empire under Japanese control. They reasoned that the subjugated countries and Godrealms would be more prosperous and harmonious if unified by their rule, just as Japan was more prosperous and harmonious after it was unified under a single emperor. While the Nazis claimed racial superiority, the Japanese claimed superior "spiritual purity," and this conquest was to be the means by which they spread their pure culture. It would also eventually allow them to establish new Axes Mundi connection points to Takamagahara throughout all of Asia.

To sustain their pace of conquest, the Axis Pantheons needed an unending supply of new weapons and new troops. All three pantheons scoured the earth to retrieve Birthrights, claim or convert Scions, and enlist the monsters who lived hidden from mortal eyes. But the most drastic move came when the Underworld Gods—Hel, Hades and Izanami—began opening the Titans' prison to recruit from among the titanspawn. They were selective in their efforts, carefully choosing only those that they thought could act as mindless weapons. Although it would be decades before the Titans burst their bonds, the death Gods today cannot shake the nagging guilt that opening Tartarus, however briefly, may have been what enabled their primordial enemies to discover the means to free themselves.

THE TURNING POINT

The Gods of the Yankee pantheon had been more or less content to stay out of the war, which seemed distant and unrelated to their immediate needs. Everything changed with the attack on Pearl Harbor and the simultaneous razing of an Axis Mundi connection point for a guest realm given by (or extracted from, depending on whom you ask) the Hawaiian goddess Uli. Amatsukami had already decreed that no foreign pantheons could have Axis Mundi connections within her empire, and this attack now declared that she believed her empire to stretch all the way to American shores.

The Yankees were quick to respond to the Amatsukami as well as their European counterparts. The vast industrial system of the United States, subdued for years by the Great Depression, now jump-started itself into full war production. The Gods of the young nation did similarly, crafting new engines of divine warfare and new strategies to redefine the conflict. Soon, they were pushing back the Amatsukami advance, capturing one island after another. At the same time, they brought critically needed troops, supplies and weapons to the European front, effectively rescuing the British pantheon from an uncertain fate and taking the pressure off the much beleaguered Russians. The Yankee arrival in the war promised neither a speedy resolution nor certain victory, but it undoubtedly tipped the scales away from the Axis for the first time since the war began.

Early on, the British and Yankee pantheons pushed their way into Italy, following their mortal troops. After relatively short but intense fighting, the Allies managed to oust Mussolini and claim the Omphalos Stone (**Scion: God**, p. 136) to serve as a gateway to Olympus. Rather than storm the mountain, however, the invaders camped at its base and shelled it night and day, then blasted it with wave after wave of bombers before going back to shelling. This rattled the Dodekatheon, and many laid down their arms. Some retreated deep within Olympus or out into the World, unable to openly oppose the one they believed to be Zeus, but also unwilling to fight any longer in a war that they never believed in.

Only Ares and Quirinus continued to man the defenses, and it is because of their fierce resistance that the Dodekatheon was able to throw back every attempt to take Olympus itself. Olympus would remain under siege until the end of the war, when Zeus returned to revoke all of Caligula's decrees. With the British and the Yankees harassing the Aesir from two sides, the Russians were able to get back on their feet. Much of the Gods' fighting on the eastern front took place in the World, amidst some of the bloodiest battles in mortal history. Baba Yaga used her magic to ensure that the winter of 1943 to 1944 was one of the coldest on record, with temperatures plummeting as low as -30 degrees Fahrenheit. The harsh winter was bad for the defenders, but even worse for the invaders, and the Aesir began to fear that too many mortals might be reminded of Fimbulwinter and that these thoughts might Fatebind the Aesir to exactly what they were trying to avoid.

On June 6, 1944, the mortal and divine troops stormed into France in the largest invasion since the war to bind the Titans. The Gods of the French pantheon, who had been working diligently to undermine the Aesir occupation from within, were now free to resume open warfare. Slowly, the lines of battle pressed closer to Berlin, and one by one the Allies recaptured their own Axes Mundi. In April of 1945, the Soviet Gods stormed into Asgard, looting many of the great halls and smashing the Rainbow Bridge when they were unable to put it to their own use. It was then that Loki bowed to Odin's wishes and released the Norse pantheon from their vows to fight.

In the Pacific, the Amatsukami seemed set to fight simply for the honor of selling back each captured Axis Mundi as dearly as possible. But when the Yankees brought forth the Poison Sun—the atomic bomb—Amaterasu saw that this was a weapon capable of eradicating each and every one of her Axis Mundi connection points in short order, not to mention obliterating the very culture she sought to propagate. She had no choice but to surrender. For the first time, mortals had created a weapon so powerful as to be feared by the Gods themselves.

THE AFTERMATH

Arguably, no event since the coming of mortals has shaped the future as much as World War Two. Nearly every deity from nearly every pantheon was involved in some way, and every one of them felt that each step they took was necessary and wise as they took it. But in the end, when the Gods turned to look back on the path they had followed, they were shocked to see the carnage and destruction they had left behind. The Gods may be callous, but they are not (generally) evil, and for a time many worked to set things right with humanity, ushering in an age of prosperity for as many as they could.

At the end of the war, the Axis pantheons were left with much to rebuild. Apollo discovered Zeus and roused him from his slumber. The Dodekatheon, united once more, banished Quirinus and cast Caligula into Tartarus with the Titans. The Amatsukami abandoned their warlike tendencies but not their warrior traditions, and turned their attentions to reclaiming the harmony and refinement they had lost during the war years. In their shame, the Aesir sought to punish the perpetrators of the Holocaust as best they could. Hel took special care to ensure that the shades of conspirators such as Auschwitz guards and Nazi high commanders received the worst her realm could offer. However, Hitler's shade never appeared for her or any of the other Underworld Gods. With Hitler's death verifiable only by the testimony of his closest retainers, the events of his last days would spin off limitless conspiracy theories, but the strands of Fate were woven around him too thickly for even the most powerful mystics and prophets to discern the truth. Some of the Gods speculate that Hitler must have been a Scion, though no God ever openly claimed him. Even Loki, who sired such horrors as the Midgard Serpent and the Fenris Wolf, would be ashamed of having fathered a monster like Hitler.

As to the Aesir experiment in the workings of Fate, Loki himself admits that it failed abjectly. Did Fate's decrees remain in place because the Axis lost, or did the Axis lose because it was Fate's decree? No one will ever know, and the cost of the experiment was far too high for any God to ever consider attempting it again.

The Axis Pantheons

Each of the Gods of the Axis truly believes in the righteousness of what he or she is doing for the war. For some, it is a fight to claim the supremacy they feel is their due. For others, it is a struggle to throw off the unjust oppression of Fate. At least for the time being, each trusts that the ends will eventually justify the means.

Presented here are the deities of the Axis pantheons who are most active during World War Two. Several who will one day walk the World in the early twenty-first century are not heavily involved in the Axis War. Similarly, a few Gods who play significant roles in the war are destined to largely remove themselves from the World in later years. The Associated Powers and Abilities of the Gods do not change over the course of mere decades, but a God's activities, rivals and Scions certainly may. The Associated Powers and Abilities for most Axis Gods can be found with their pantheon descriptions in **Scion: Hero** (pp. 49-96) and have been included here only for the Gods who were more active during the war. Additionally, while a God may have rivals whom he seeks to show-up or outdo, the Gods now have war-time enemies whom they aggressively seek to injure and destroy.

Enemies: Britannia, d'Artagnan, Paul Bunyan, Uncle Sam

The Aesir

The warriors of the Norse pantheon see themselves as liberators and visionaries. For eons, Gods have sought to shake off the shackles of Fate, and none more so than those doomed to die during Ragnarök. Now, Loki has proposed the means to enshrine the Aesir as the secret progenitors of the "Ultimate Reich," thus sheltering themselves from the prophesy through the fervent beliefs of millions of mortals convinced that the Reich will never fall.

The Aesir go to war to establish the Ultimate Reich both on the World and in the Overworld. When they invade other Godrealms, they do not seek to kill the Gods. Instead, the Aesir claim that imprisonment will set them free, as it gives the Gods a chance to re-define their own paradigm of Fate. However, the Aesir will stop at nothing, and when they deem it both possible and necessary they will not balk at killing their fellows.

Loki's theory about the Ultimate Reich was not immediately accepted by the rest of the Norse Pantheon. Although the possibility of escaping Ragnarök was too tempting to ignore, the other Aesir were hesitant to trust the trickster. Only when Odin received a vision that supported Loki's theory did the rest allow themselves to hope. Some suspected Loki of supplying Odin with a false vision, but none pressed the issue. By Odin's wish, every God of the pantheon swore on Gungnir, Odin's sacred spear, to assist Loki in this experiment and to follow him into battle to create the Ultimate Reich.

GERMANIC NAMES

Although the Germans do not officially worship the Norse gods, their mythology is widely studied and seen as a source for national unity. Among the Nazis, several of the Gods are better known by alternate names:

Odin	Wotan
Frigg	Fricka
Freya	Freyja
Thor	Donner
Freyr	Froh
Loki	Loge
Tyr	Ziu

Baldur

Description: Baldur represents the Aryan ideal: tall, with blond hair, blue-eyes, strong jaw and a chiseled physique. He is the promise the Nazis are making to the world, and what they believe they can become if they establish their Reich and purify their race.

Baldur's mother Frigg is keeping him in his heavily guarded, golden-roofed hall in Asgard. She is taking no chances that their gamble with Fate may backfire into initiating Ragnarök. Baldur spends his time there, cataloguing and re-distributing the captured Birthrights of other pantheons, determining how each might best be used to establish the Ultimate Reich and subvert Fate.

Baldur's Scions are active as diplomats, propagandists, celebrities and captains of industry. Their faces grace the posters that depict Aryan soldiers marching across Europe. Their voices reach out through the airwaves to the radios of American and British soldiers to inspire fear and invite surrender. Their hands prepare the parade grounds where bonfires, flags and sweeping spotlights lend a hypnotic quality to *der Führer's* speeches.

Rivals: Hel; Apollo, Izanami

Enemies: Br'er Rabbit, The Citizen

Freya

Description: Freya projects the image of the mother left behind in the homeland, the person soldiers fight to protect. She keeps her red hair in a tight bun and commonly wears an apron over crisp, angular clothes.

Freya's chief duties in this war involve training both men and monsters. She has established various youth programs that serve as military feeder organizations. She also hunts monsters from around the World, either negotiating their conscription to the cause or breaking them to the Nazi yoke. Often, when Hel cannot control a titanspawn she has released from Tartarus, the Aesir will call upon Freya to "reason" with it.

Freya's Scions are not often found on the front lines, but they are extremely active in the war effort. They serve as combat trainers and drill sergeants, especially for the youth corps such as glider clubs that give children flight experience they can later use as fighter pilots, and scout organizations for future infantrymen to practice hiking, camping and shooting. Her Scions also include Nazi political organizers, field medics and morale officers.

Rivals: Frigg, Hel; Artemis, Athena, Raiden

Enemies: Betsy Ross, Britannia, Rodina Mat

Freyr

Description: When Freyr is not in uniform, he wears an extremely expensive business suit with a bright golden pocket watch chain looping across it. His body has taken on just enough weight to suggest prosperity without hinting at idleness. He is involved in every stage of battle, from planning to fighting. Freyr also tends to the German economy, forever seeking to expand the industrial base and technological progress. He also ensures that the farm belts produce the food they need, and that these goods are distributed efficiently to their soldiers throughout Europe and Africa.

German soldiers have the most supplies, the best weapons and the most plentiful food of any fighting force in the world. It is Freyr's Scions who can take much of the credit for this. They oversee the supply chains, run the factories and test experimental weapons and vehicles. And they make money—*lots* of money.

Rivals: Thor, Tyr; Izanagi, Quirinus

Enemies: The Citizen, Johnny Appleseed, John Bull, Paul Bunyan

Frigg

Description: The Wife of Odin is as stately as ever, projecting the dignity and elegance becoming of a party leader. Among her pantheon, she is the most dubious of Loki's plans to manipulate Fate, but this has not stopped her from enjoying the finery captured from other pantheons.

Despite her doubts, Frigg has dedicated herself to the future of the Ultimate Reich. She had taken the opportunity to initiate experiments with a little-known proviso of Loki's plan which involves selective breeding. Like the Gods themselves, part-divine Scions interbreed with mortals, leaving traces of ichor in their descendants. Frigg's eugenics programs are designed to isolate this divine heritage and one day create a distinct race of heroes. Even if it works, these programs wouldn't yield results for decades, but Frigg has managed to produce large numbers of very adept soldiers, though whether their prowess comes from their heritage or their upbringing is a matter of some debate. Unfortunately, the mortals involved in these programs often misinterpret the nature of the experiment, and read into it erroneous laws of racial purity.

Among her Scions are military wives, political figures and social program coordinators, as well as a great many battlefield heroes. Her Scions are also frequently called upon to play match-makers, bringing together men and women with the proper heritage and physical traits to further the breeding programs.

Rivals: Freya, Hera; Amaterasu, Aphrodite

Enemies: Baba Yaga, Betsy Ross, Britannia, Rosie the Riveter

Heimdall

Description: Battle-grizzled and sharp-eyed, Heimdall virtually never leaves his post on Bifröst. His duty is to guard the homeland, which he does with unwavering patience. He wears the long overcoat of a military officer, and he stands ready to call upon any supernatural or terrestrial means to defend Asgard from exactly the kind of attack its residents carry out against others. Heimdall is also the key to the Aesir's war strategy, facilitating Blitzkriegs by linking the Rainbow Bridge to enemy Axis Mundi connection points on Earth. These connections allow the warriors of Asgard to instantly storm forth into another realm with very little travel or warning.

Heimdall's Scions call on the power of artillery, tanks and machinegun nests to create Fortress Europe. Any enemy attempting to cross their lines faces a slow, bloody crawl for mile after mile. Heimdall's Scions shoot the planes out of the air, blast tanks off their beaches and litter the ground outside their positions with the corpses of enemy soldiers. Each has vowed that no one will cross the Rhine while he lives.

Rivals: Loki; Athena, Caligula, Hermes, Izanagi

Enemies: d'Artagnan, John Bull, John Henry, Rodina Mat, Uncle Sam

Hel

Description: Hel now wears a Gestapo uniform that starkly emphasizes her half beautiful, half horrible face. Hel's most significant contribution is the releasing of groups of titanspawn to serve as soldiers. Her selection criteria allows for the release of only the stupidest, most easily manipulated monsters, and these she sends to the Overworld (and sometimes to the World) to serve as shock troops and cannon fodder. Every so often, she frees one that is too difficult to control, forcing her to hunt it down and destroy it before it can escape the Underworld.

Hel's few Scions work primarily as morticians, doctors and over-seas spies and sympathizers. Many are charged with tending and controlling the titanspawn brought to the battlefield, sometimes training them to obey specific commands and other times simply dropping them behind enemy lines to do their worst. Hel has at least one Scion who serves as the warden of a concentration camp, but he is Fated to be physically torn apart when his mother finds out what he has done.

Rivals: Freya; Dionysus, Marishiten

Enemies: Johnny Appleseed, John Henry, Madame Guillotine

Loki

Description: The architect of the "Ultimate Reich," Loki now styles himself after the charismatic dictators of the era. His bearing is disciplined yet aggressive, and

his dress is a prim uniform. As the temporary leader of the Aesir, he has mastered the art of inspiring oration, never failing to whip his warriors into battle frenzy before a Blitzkrieg. Caligula also regularly comes to Loki for advice on handling members of his own pantheon, although the Roman Emperor seldom acts on that advice predictably.

Loki's true motivations for this experiment remain inscrutable. After having worked so diligently to bring about Ragnarök on other occasions, it seems out of character that he would now go to such lengths to avoid it. Perhaps this is a scheme to hasten the end of the world. Or perhaps he truly believes in it and is willing to make sacrifices to escape what he knows will mean his own death. A third possibility is that this is simply a play to become the highest of all Gods, first by supplanting Odin as general for the duration of a never-ending war and then by subjugating all other pantheons. These possibilities are only guesswork and slanderous gossip. Loki will never admit to performing these actions for any reason other than what he openly claims.

Loki has many active Scions, most of whom serve in high positions of government and military—many of them overseas. They are the master spies, the message encryption operators and the code breakers. Loki's Scions are also adept at formulating cunning strategies and clever ruses, often determining with uncanny accuracy the weakest spot in an enemy's line.

Rivals: Heimdall, Odin; Amaterasu, Hermes, Marishiten, Quirinus,

Enemies: Br'er Rabbit, Britannia, The Citizen, John Bull, Robin Hood, Madame Guillotine, Marianne, Rodina Mat, Uncle Sam

Njord
aka: Niord, Niorðr, Njörd, Njörðr

Description: The father of Freya and Freyr, Njord is one of the Vanir who joined the Aesir eons ago. Njord wears the clothing of a seafarer from whatever era he is in, and he prefers to reside near the coasts of great oceans. He is favored by sailors for his ability to calm the skies and the seas. His wife is a giantess who was allowed to select a husband from the men of Asgard provided that she make her decision seeing only their feet. She selected Njord because his feet were the cleanest, scrubbed as they were by the ocean waters.

By nature, Njord is not as warlike as many of the Aesir, but he has as much at stake in this war as they do, and he has sworn by the spear, just like the others. Loki has charged him with a single task: stop the enemy at sea. So, Njord leads the Aesir on raids that involve combat on or beneath the waves. More often, he finds himself under-equipped and ignored by the high command, so he must maintain a defensive, guerilla war against other Gods in the Atlantic and in the waters of the Overworld.

Nearly all of Njord's Scions are in the Kreigsmarine, and most of those are captains of U-boats. Others serve as sailors in the battleships and fast-attack boats that comprise the rest of Hilter's navy, and several also act as admirals and officers stationed in Berlin or along the outposts in occupied France.

Associated Powers: Epic Stamina, Fire, Jotunblut, Sky, Water

Abilities: Athletics, Awareness, Control, Fortitude, Stealth, Survival

Rivals: Odin, Vidar; Hades, Susano-o

Enemies: Britannia, Columbia, John Bull

Odin

Description: The All-father now wears the attire of a general of the highest rank. Although his bargain has temporarily handed all nominal power over to Loki, Odin is still the chief planner and the one whom the Aesir look to for orders. He may be oath-bound to follow Loki's lead, but Odin is beginning to wonder whether Loki has the ability to succeed at his own plan.

Odin's Scions are often high ranking officers, including commanders of tank columns or large infantry divisions. At least one of Odin's Scions is plotting the assassination of Adolf Hitler—not from ambition to replace him but out of fear that *der Führer* is losing his grip on reality. No one can say whether this was ultimately Odin's scheme, but Hitler's death could certainly hasten the end of Loki's experiment.

Rivals: Loki; Ares, Caligula, Hachiman

Enemies: Britannia, Rodina Mat, Uncle Sam

Thor

Description: The God of Thunder has replaced his traditional furs with a leather flight suit and a long white muffler. Thor is one of the most active warriors of the Ultimate Reich, and, despite his deeply ingrained mistrust of Loki, he eagerly leads Blitzkrieg after Blitzkrieg into enemy Godrealms. Although he still prefers to fight with fists and hammer, he is greatly amused by the new toys of war, particularly the airplanes and the experimental rockets, and has often brought elements of the Luftwaffe into Overworld battles. Thor's constant battling has led him to be overprotective of his wife, Sif, whom he has ordered not to leave their home of Bilkskirnir. If the mighty thunder god has a weakness, it is his growing obsession with keeping her from being besmirched by the horrors of this war.

Thor's numerous Scions can be found wherever there are fast vehicles. Most are pilots, deadly in both dogfights and bomb runs. Those who prefer more personal battle join the ranks of paratroopers or ride the tanks that sprint through enemy territory.

Rivals: Freyr, Loki; Apollo, Hermes, Raiden

Enemies: Baba Yaga, d'Artagnan, John Henry, Robin Hood, Pecos Bill

Tyr

Description: Tyr wears the uniform of an infantry general, medals on his chest and mud on his boots. After a foray into a Godrealm, Tyr stays to organize the occupational forces within the captured territory, and sees to it that the treatment of conquered Gods is neither too harsh nor too lenient. He and the forces he commands are also responsible for establishing the front lines of defense against counter attacks.

Tyr's Scions tend to be the first ones into new territory and the last ones to leave. They have set up the regional administrations within France and other conquered nations, and hunt for spies, resistance cells and the underground railroads used to transport escaped Allied prisoners and downed airmen back to safe territory. Tyr's children tend to be patient, self sacrificing and determined to support the cause.

Rivals: Loki; Artemis, Hachiman, Hephaestus

Enemies: Br'er Rabbit, D'Artagnan, Robin Hood, Madame Guillotine, Marianne, Pecos Bill

Vidar

Description: The God of vengeance has found the perfect role as master of the swift counter-attack. Vidar has been quick to utilize the new weapons of war, particularly tanks, rail guns and mobile artillery. Enemies often gain ground only to find that they have been cut off from the rear and are now surrounded by Vidar's advance. Vidar is particularly active against the Soviet Gods, where his icy determination matches their cold and stubborn resistance.

Vidar's Scions are very much drawn to panzer divisions. Powerful weapons, thick armor and rapid movement make their tank groups among the most feared fighting forces in the world.

Rivals: Njord, Loki; Dionysus, Tsuki-Yomi

Enemies: Baba Yaga, The Citizen, John Henry, Rodina Mat, Uncle Sam

THE AMATSUKAMI

Originally, the Emperor and the Gods of Japan wished only to be left in peace, but foreign powers would not allow it. Uncultured outsiders sold dishonorable weapons to ambitious daimyos, forced their way into closed harbors with gunboat diplomacy and finally placed a stranglehold on oil through trade sanctions. This exploitation has been even more pronounced elsewhere in Asia, though not every nation is wise enough to see it or powerful enough to stop it. Therefore, the Japanese Empire will drive out the foreign devils, brutally conquer all countries that resist Imperial rule and enforce Japanese standards of culture and prosperity on all subjugated peoples. This is to be their gift to all of East Asia.

Amaterasu regrets the necessity of this war, but she also truly believes that it is the only way to re-establish harmony within her lands. She directs the broad strokes of the war, though Hachiman and the other generals are expected to take care of the details. They shield her from the more unpleasant aspects of the fighting, reporting to her only the glories of battle and not the unpleasant means by which the war must be prosecuted. They assume that Amaterasu, in her wisdom, must know these details, but that it would be unbecoming to speak of such vulgarities in her presence.

A smaller and traditionally more isolated pantheon, the Amatsukami are widely underestimated by foreign powers. Indeed, it seems they are not considered a pressing threat even after their string of victories across the World. All that began to change with the attack on the Yankees in Hawaii. Now, though hard pressed, many of the Amatsukami would be pleased to fight for nothing more than to prove their formidability as warriors.

AMATERASU

Description: Giving orders from her throne room in Takamagahara, Amaterasu believes that the world will one day thank her for spreading her gifts to them. She also maintains close communication with Emperor Hirohito, and the two discuss philosophical, military and cultural matters at length. Her greatest fear is that if the Yankees cannot be stopped, they may sever her direct connection to the imperial family, which would hamper her efforts to serve as the wellspring of inspiration and beauty for her nation.

The Scions of the sun goddess are often generals, politicians and priests. Many of them are ignorant of the atrocities that are being committed in the name of the Empire, and they would certainly punish the perpetrators if they found out. Of Amaterasu's descendants who are directly involved in the fighting, they are invariably possessed of high rank or specialized skills.

Rivals: Marishiten, Tsuki-yomi; Apollo, Caligula, Frigg, Loki

Enemies: Britannia, Columbia, Uncle Sam

HACHIMAN

Description: As the God of samurai and protector of the influential Minamoto warrior clan, Hachiman is in his element. His brazen tactics in the invasion of the Celestial Bureaucracy serve as the model for nearly all Overworld wars to follow. Hachiman now fights to honor Amaterasu and the Emperor, and to prove that his nation must never be trifled with. The oil embargos placed upon Japan have limited his ability to experiment with new types of fighting vehicles, but few are as adept as Hachiman at taking advantage of terrain or at inspiring fearlessness in infantrymen.

Of all the Amatsukami, Hachiman has the greatest number of Scions active. These serve in every branch of the military, acting as shock troops, machine gunners, artillery personnel, prison camp commanders and field officers. Hachiman's Scions are especially adept at defense: although the Yankees outnumber and outgun them, they intend to take so many with them into death that the soft Americans will lose their fighting spirit long before reaching Japan.

Rivals: Marishiten; Ares, Odin, Quirinus, Tyr

Enemies: John Bull, John Henry, Paul Bunyan

IZANAGI

Description: Izanagi is perhaps the only God who truly realizes the toll the war is taking on the people of Japan. Although combat has not yet come to Japan or Takamagahara, Izanagi sees that the enemies are drawing the net ever tighter, and he hears the private mourning of all the families who have lost sons abroad. Stooped and sad-eyed, Izanagi contributes to the war by overseeing the production of weapons and the distribution of supplies.

Izanagi's few Scions are now, as always, destined for grief. They are the soldiers who see their platoons cut down or the mothers whose sons are missing at sea. Still, they also share an ability to put their grief aside when in public and rise to meet the needs of the nation.

Rivals: Izanami; Dionysus, Freyr, Hades, Heimdall

Enemies: Betsy Ross, Johnny Appleseed

IZANAMI

Description: Izanami is generally preoccupied by the massive influx of spirits coming to her from the battlefields. Of the three Axis Gods of the Underworld, she is the most conservative in releasing titanspawn, generally choosing only those who will swear an oath to fight in the service of Amaterasu and her generals. She then tests them in their resolve, subjecting them to great hardships and numerous tricks to assess their loyalty. Izanami's Scions are often embittered loners in important positions. They guard

the POWs, count the dead or tend the dying. When she calls upon them for service, it is usually to look after the monsters she has released.

Rivals: Izanagi; Hephaestus, Hera

Enemies: Baba Yaga, Johnny Appleseed, Madame Guillotine, Rosie the Riveter

MARISHITEN

AKA: MARISHISONTEN, MARISHI, MARICI, MOLICHITIAN

Description: Marishiten is a deity of light, mirages and illusion, and is a defender in times of war. She is often symbolized as the shimmer of hot air, and her opponents find her as elusive and invisible as her symbol. Warriors pray to her for protection against being seen by the enemy. Her steed is a boar, and she may appear with anywhere from one to six faces (one of which may be that of a sow) and from two to twelve arms.

Marishiten is not native to Japan and, to make matters worse, she personally converted to Buddhism shortly after being allowed to join the Amatsukami. For this reason, the other Gods of the pantheon feel that it is unbecoming to associate with Marishiten too extensively, and she is not allowed into Amaterasu's court. Still, they find themselves calling upon Marishiten's talents again and again. She is a mighty warrior, yet does not rely on direct assault when deception and misdirection might serve. She is an adept instructor of military strategy and combat arts, and above all teaches her pupils that life itself is yet another illusion, thus allowing them to release their fear of death.

Marishiten's Scions make superb battle planners, commandos and shadow warriors. Generally, her Scions are detached from worldly rewards, seeking only to prefect themselves and their military art. As do the majority of Japanese citizens, they practice both Buddhism and Shintoism, although the Scions of Marishiten frequently remove themselves on religious retreats and a high proportion retire into the Buddhist priesthood.

Associated Powers: Epic Appearance, Epic Dexterity, Animal (Boar), Darkness, Sun, Tsukumo-Gami

Abilities: Awareness, Empathy, Integrity, Larceny, Fortitude, Stealth

Rivals: Amaterasu, Hachiman; Athena, Hel, Loki

Enemies: Br'er Rabbit, d'Artagnan, Robin Hood, Rosie the Riveter

RAIDEN

Description: Raiden now eschews his traditional garb in favor of a modern flight suit. He has risen to the challenge of the new possibility of mortal aerial combat, and personally took steps to ensure that the Zero would be faster and more maneuverable than any fighter their enemies could put into the air. Raiden is particularly concerned with the defense of the Japanese homeland. He knows that it will take more to drive off their current enemies than the storm he used to repel the Mongolian invaders several centuries ago. For this reason, Raiden has been searching for pilots willing to become a very different kind of "divine wind."

While some few prove to be very effective ground fighters, most of Raiden's Scions are drawn to the speed and freedom available only to fighter pilots. They travel with the Imperial Navy throughout the Pacific and with Raiden into the Overworld. In combat they fly in disciplined, organized formations, but on the ground they have a longstanding reputation for disorderly conduct, picking fights and indulging in booze and women.

Rivals: Susano-o; Freya, Hermes, Thor

Enemies: John Henry, Pecos Bill, Rodina Mat, Uncle Sam

SUSANO-O

Description: Susano-o has believed from before the attack on Hawaii that the war was doomed to failure, but this has not stopped him from performing his duty. As the master psychopomp and chief strategist, he found that he was unable to develop a strategy for victory, so instead he gave Amaterasu the "best possible strategy" in which their superior determination might achieve a stalemate with the Yankees.

Although it is somewhat out of character for him to dress neatly, he shows his dedication to the war by wearing a prim Imperial Navy Admiral's uniform, complete with polished shoes and a sword at his side. Even so, he relies on subordinates to suggest changing into more presentable garb whenever his uniform becomes too waterlogged. He enjoys the feeling of the Navy's massively powerful battleships plying the ocean, and he revels in the thunderous destruction of their mighty cannon.

Susano-o's Scions are really best suited for service at sea, where they can use their Birthrights to great advantage in maritime warfare. They make excellent and courageous sailors, although they have difficulty containing their stormy emotions in the absence of action.

Rivals: Raiden; Njord, Quirinus

Enemies: Columbia, The Citizen, Paul Bunyan, Pecos Bill

TSUKI-YOMI

Description: Disgruntled and displeased to have been ordered away from his studies, Tsuki-yomi is currently assigned to spend the war years as ambassador to foreign pantheons. He moves through the World and the Overworld, spending as much time in the company of enemies as allies. It was his idea which birthed the pact between the Axis pantheons, but none of the other Amatsukami seem willing to recognize his contributions.

Most of Tsuki-yomi's Scions feel out of place during this war. They may have been drafted into the lower ranks of the armed forces, or may follow the Imperial Army into war-torn areas as reporters, entertainers and civil engineers. Many also serve as diplomats and ambassadors, and some few are ex-patriots unable to return to Japan for the duration of the war.

Rivals: Amaterasu; Artemis, Aphrodite, Vidar

Enemies: Betsy Ross, Johnny Appleseed, Marianne

THE DODEKATHEON

Shortly after the conclusion of World War One, Caligula, with the help of Quirinus, distilled water from the river Lethe into a potion so potent that it could even overpower the king of the Gods—at least for a time. Preparing Zeus' wine with this concoction, Caligula then hid him away in a forgotten cell deep within Olympus and seized control of the Dodekatheon by impersonating their king.

Once on the throne, Caligula made increasingly unrealistic demands of his fellow Gods. He declared that the time had come to harness the new Italian nationalism to re-establish the old Roman Empire. Ares, Caligula's sidekick Quirinus and a few others greeted this proclamation with vigorous approval. The other Olympians, however, were deeply hesitant, fearing that conflict would harm their interests in the wider mortal world. They do as ordered, but they rarely apply the creativity and expertise for which they are so famous. Poseidon abandoned the effort altogether after Caligula ridiculed him for early defeats to the Italian Navy, and many of the others are beginning to envy the sea god's banishment as they grow to fear the unpredictable temper of their leader.

ROMAN NAMES

The old Gods of Rome and Greece have not been formally worshiped in nearly two millennia, but they have enjoyed wide reverence as symbols of historical, intellectual and cultural significance. The Italians, who inhabit the heartland of the once mighty Roman Empire, would more readily refer to the Gods by their Latin names:

Aphrodite	Venus
Ares	Mars
Artemis	Diana
Athena	Minerva
Dionysus	Bacchus
Hades	Pluto
Hephaestus	Vulcan
Hera	Juno
Hermes	Mercury

APHRODITE

Description: The Goddess of love was never really one to be found on the battlefront, but she has always had an important role during war. She now wanders the battlefields of Europe, encouraging soldiers of both sides to tap into the tremendous emotions produced by the proximity of death. There is nothing that will inspire *amour* quite so rapidly as the imminent possibility of death, and these urges are compounded in soldiers who are far away from home, travelling through exotic lands and free from conventional social expectations. Caligula has ordered Aphrodite to keep the enemy forces distracted, but she is not likely to play favorites; if the Allies are finding the girls in occupied countries more welcoming, it is only because they are coming in as liberators rather than conquerors.

Aphrodite's Scions can be found throughout the world, working as USO entertainers, celebrities and prostitutes. Much to Caligula's irritation, most of Aphrodite's Scions prefer to work for the country of their birth, whichever that may be. However, those who are more obedient to the Emperor have proven their worth as spies, able to charm their way into the most secure facilities and coax information from the most recalcitrant generals.

Rivals: Hephaestus; Freya, Tsuki-yomi

Enemies: Betsy Ross, Britannia, Marianne

APOLLO

Description: As a physician and artist, Apollo supports this war only because Caligula spun images of disseminating science and culture throughout the world just as the Roman Empire once did. Now, Apollo is having doubts, and is beginning to wonder what madness has taken hold of his father. When Apollo accompanies Ares on an attack, his chief role is that of healer, and he insists on tending to the injured of both sides equally. When he can get away from his duties, he wanders the World, helping the suffering mortals as he can.

Apollo's Scions spend much of the war working to mitigate the limitless tragedies all around them. They might serve as field surgeons perpetually in conflict with their less merciful superiors, or as war correspondents fighting censorship. They can also be found as politicians whose cooler heads did not avail, but who are quietly awaiting the right time to build a consensus for surrender.

Rivals: Hades, Caligula; Thor, Raiden, Vidar

Enemies: John Bull, John Henry, Madame Guillotine

ARES

Description: Along with Hera, Ares may be one of the only members of the Dodekatheon who suspects that Zeus has been replaced. If he knows the truth, Ares certainly has little reason to reveal it, since the inconsistent leadership has allowed the war God to run amok. He has accompanied the Aesir on several of their raids and conducted attacks of his own on various pantheons connected with northern Africa. In particular, he has frequently skirmished with the Presedjet, whose people and lands were once a very valuable tributary to Rome. Lately, however, Allied pressure has forced Ares to fall back in defense of his home. When victorious, Ares trumpets his success loudly. When defeated, he rails at the other Olympians for their lack of aggression.

Ares' Scions can be found throughout the Italian army. They are the commanders who motivate their men through fear. They are also the stalwart soldiers who hold the mountain passes, throwing back attack after attack from their machinegun nests. None of them will ever consider abandoning the struggle, and they do not hesitate to shoot their own compatriots for talk of treason or surrender.

Rivals: Apollo, Artemis, Athena; Hachiman, Odin

Enemies: The Citizen, d'Artagnan, John Henry, Paul Bunyan

ARTEMIS

Description: Although not officially banned from Olympus, Artemis has been kept far away from Caligula, no doubt because the Emperor fears her godly perception. This exclusion suits Artemis just fine, as she is growing increasingly disgusted with the wars of men. When called to battle, she is usually ordered to contribute her skills as a huntress in tracking down enemies or finding and recruiting legendary monsters. When she is not on duty, she takes on the role of protector of prostitutes, not so much because she relishes this profession, but because this is the only form of livelihood left for many women in war-torn areas.

Artemis' Scions, though few in number, tend to shift their roles throughout the war. Many serve as red-cross nurses, military scouts and brothel madams. Whenever circumstance allows, they would rather be the ones picking up after a devastating attack than causing the destruction.

Rivals: Ares, Hera, Quirinus; Freyr, Loki, Raiden

Enemies: Britannia, Rosie the Riveter, Uncle Sam

ATHENA

Description: Athena is deeply torn by this war through her intimate connections with so many enemy countries. As a Goddess of wisdom and justice, she was actively involved in the creation of many of the modern constitutional democracies, and placed her own daughters—Britannia, Columbia and Marianne—at the heads of pantheons who have now come to be the fiercest enemies of her own. Still, as Goddess of war and the helper of heroes, she is heavily relied upon by the Axis. Although she acquits herself well on the battlefields of the Overworld, she has also committed several betrayals, slipping critical pieces of information to the Allies. She hides her true actions in a dangerous game of counter-intelligence and misinformation.

Athena has Scions serving in the Italian army, but she has also adopted children in Greece, France, England and the United States who are fighting against the Axis. She tells the Dodekatheon that these other Scions are disobedient, but in fact she actively organizes them to minimize the long-term damage of this war as much as possible. Many serve as soldiers, generals and communications officers, although she also has Scions working in Bletchley Park to crack the Enigma Code, and others acting as spies and double agents in other ways. About half are ultimately loyal to Italy, and something like ten percent are aware of the identities or activities of any of their siblings.

Rivals: Caligula, Ares, Quirinus, Hera; Loki, Marishiten, Vidar

Enemies: Baba Yaga, Br'er Rabbit, Madame Guillotine, Rodina Mat

CALIGULA

AKA: GAIUS JULIUS CAESAR AUGUSTUS GERMANICUS

Description: Widely known for his cruelty, hedonism and sexual perversity, Caligula used his position as Emperor to declare that Rome should worship him as a God. Even before he ascended to Olympus, he had already developed a tendency to impersonate various Gods at official functions, and eventually even took to signing legal documents with the name "Jupiter." Considering this background, it is hardly surprising that he hatched the scheme to supplant Zeus. What is a surprise is how effectively he has pulled it off—although his impersonation is about the only thing at which Caligula is currently succeeding. He has been reveling in the luxuries afforded to him as ruler of the Dodekatheon, while at the same time issuing contradictory and impossible orders to his subjects. He has reverted to all the questionable practices he enjoyed in his days as Emperor, which—although not entirely out of keeping with Zeus' past behavior—has been raising eyebrows.

Caligula is seeking to replicate Italian fascism on Olympus and use it to re-establish the Roman Empire. What the conspirators do not seem to understand is that these authoritative commands and harsh punishments do not sit well with the Gods, who have always been strong individualists. Somehow, Caligula manages to restrain himself just enough to avoid open revolt, but he has unquestionably generated more resentment than loyalty.

Caligula has scattered his Scions far and wide throughout the Mediterranean area. They frequently find their way into politics, where they preach fanatic dedication to the state while accepting bribes for their own ends. They are the commanders who go too far in disciplining their soldiers, the priests who abuse their flocks and the defense contractors who line their pockets by supplying defective equipment to soldiers. Nearly all of his Scions can be described as reckless, cruel and dangerous.

Associated Powers: Epic Appearance, Epic Manipulation, Arete, Chaos, Magic

Abilities: Command, Integrity, Investigation, Larceny, Politics, Presence

Rivals: Athena, Apollo, Hades; Amaterasu, Hera, Odin, Marishiten

Enemies: Britannia, Columbia, Robin Hood, Marianne, Uncle Sam

DIONYSUS

Description: Some might have assumed that Dionysus' festivities would be slowed by the war, but in fact the revels have accelerated. He now plays host to a generation of young people who cannot assume they will be alive tomorrow, which means they are ready to celebrate tonight. Like Aphrodite, Dionysus has orders to keep the enemy distracted but does not truly play favorites between the Axis and Allied soldiers.

As often as not, Dionysus' Scions are from countries outside the Axis. They often operate recreational facilities, from big band dance halls to small-time gin joints and cabarets. Those who are drafted into some branch of service are likely to desert at the first opportunity, although they never fail to help their fellow soldiers set up stills before they go. The children of Dionysus do serve one very important wartime function: the black market. They are the men and women, both in and out uniform, who can provide anything from fresh eggs to hashish—provided that the client can cough up the dough.

Rivals: Hades; Baldur, Susano-o, Vidar

Enemies: Betsy Ross, The Citizen, Pecos Bill, Rodina Mat

HADES

Description: After seeing his brother Poseidon so harshly and unfairly criticized, Hades has decided to avoid Olympus as much as possible. This is perfectly acceptable, especially considering that Hera has insisted that Hades release titanspawn for use in the war. Against his better judgment, Hades agreed to this plan and now frees the ancient horrors based on his assessment of their reason. Those monsters with enough enlightened self-interest to see the benefit of fighting for the Dodekatheon are allowed out, though kept under strict supervision. Hades is careful to avoid releasing any creatures that might be too intelligent, such as Prometheus, for fear that they might outsmart their captors.

Although the Scions of Hades are few in number, they have managed to accumulate great amounts of wealth. They are the men and women who profit from carnage, whether by looting the fallen soldiers, buying out war-torn properties at low prices or selling their services as morticians. This wealth never seems to make them happy, although their melancholia grants them little pity for the plights of others.

Rivals: Apollo, Dionysus, Hera; Amaterasu, Hel

Enemies: d'Artagnan, Johnny Appleseed, John Henry

HEPHAESTUS

Description: Since the start of the war, Hephaestus has been the "guest" of the Aesir in Asgard. Hera grumbles that this is a polite way of calling him a hostage, but in truth the God of the forge is key to the war effort. He has been working closely with the dwarves to develop engines of destruction unlike any the Overworld has seen. Thanks to his efforts, the Axis has enjoyed technological superiority throughout nearly the entire war.

The Scions of Hephaestus are weapon designers, scientists and engineers. With their help, Germany and its allies have been able to dominate the battlefield through the superior range, speed and reliability of their weapons and vehicles. Hephaestus' Scions tend to be very removed from the implementation of these devices, and all too often they do not consider the moral or ethical implications of their creations.

Rivals: Apollo; Heimdall, Izanagi

Enemies: The Citizen, Paul Bunyan, Rosie the Riveter

HERA

Description: Like her son Ares, Hera may very well know that Caligula has replaced Zeus, but so long as she can maintain plausible deniability she has too much to gain from the arrangement. She is living the life of a pampered stateswoman, safe from the action while able to enjoy the spoils of war. She would love nothing more than for her children to establish an Overworld Empire, and is not above manipulation and deceit to make sure that their allies get less than a fair share of the conquests. Her primary role is that of diplomat, for which her skills with manipulation and trickery combine well with her jealous protection of her family's interests.

Her Scions are the political opportunists and the war wives who stand to inherit greatly if their husbands fail to return. More than that, Hera calls upon her children in the World to serve as spies and *agents provocateurs*, pulling strings within and between governments, manipulating political debates and adjusting the flow of supplies and soldiers to serve Hera's immediate interests.

Rivals: Athena; Amaterasu, Freya, Loki, Odin, Tsuki-yomi

Enemies: Betsy Ross, Br'er Rabbit, Britannia, Marianne, Rodina Mat

HERMES

Description: Hermes, traditionally the messenger, now serves the Dodekatheon as spy and infiltrator. These tasks he accomplishes with both finesse and glee, turning his natural trickster behavior into powerful intelligence-gathering gambits. But as much as he keeps an eye on his enemies, he keeps an even closer eye on the other Axis powers, feeding information back to the mistrustful Hera.

Hermes' Scions are a clever, wily lot, known more for swiftness than for courage on the battlefield. They usually gravitate to duties involving communications, having served as radio operators, cryptographers and propagandists. Those who are civilians also frequently work in communications, and include brave front-lines reporters, filmmakers and radio personalities.

Rivals: Apollo, Quirinus; Marishiten, Loki, Odin, Thor

Enemies: Br'er Rabbit, d'Artagnan, Robin Hood

QUIRINUS
AKA: ROMULUS

Description: Scion of Ares, Quirinus is the deified form of Romulus, one of the two brothers who founded Rome. Originally, he was one of three Gods given primary dominion over the city, but he and Ares were replaced by Athena and Hera, and he was thus relegated to obscurity even as the empire he co-founded rose to supremacy. He has been nursing his jealousy for more than two thousand years, and now, with Caligula serving as the face of the operation, he has devised a way to restart his empire with himself at its helm.

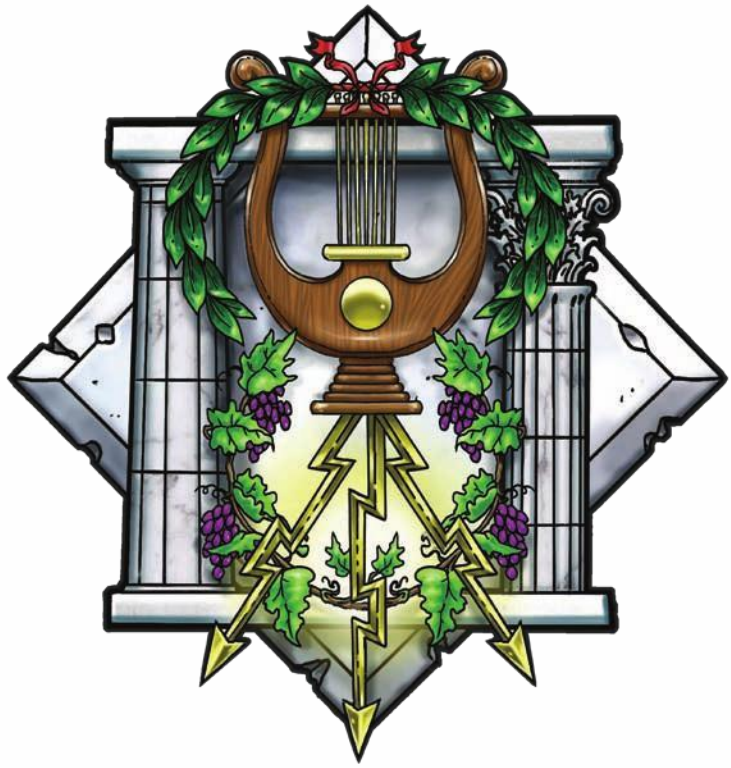
Quirinus is a rugged and disciplined soldier, less prone to rage than Ares but no less courageous. He can also be calculating and ruthless, and even slew his own brother in order to take control of his city. He makes a dashing figure and a good leader, while at the same time he is known for poor manners, inconsideration for others and rough personal hygiene—possibly all explained by the fact that he was literally raised by wolves. On the battlefield he has proven himself almost as mighty as Ares, and far more cunning in matters of state.

Quirinus' Scions are drawn to war, most frequently serving as military and political leaders capable of making tough decisions. They are implacable foes and adept statesmen, but never seem fully adjusted to civilized life.

Associated Powers: Epic Strength, Animal (Wolf), Arete, War

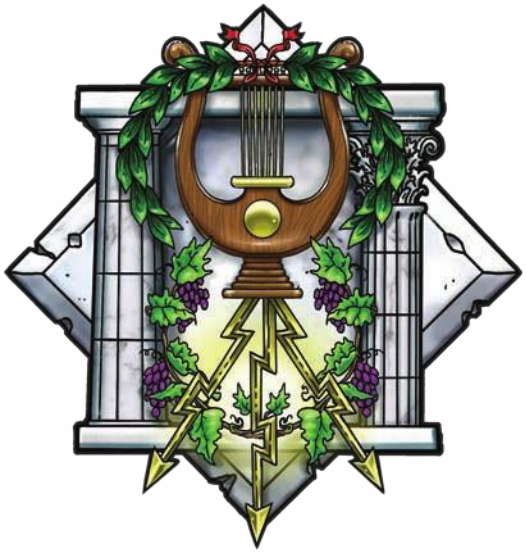
Abilities: Animal Ken, Athletics, Command, Melee, Presence, Survival

Rivals: Athena, Hera; Freyr,



Scions of the Axis Pantheons

The Axis Gods generally seek aggressive Scions who assume the superiority of their people and their regime. A Scion of Vidar is presented here as a beginning hero-level Scion, and a Scion of Raiden is presented as a demigod-level character.



SS-Sturmführer Klaus Schmitt

Scion of Vidar

As a child, Klaus Schmitt was told that his father died in the Great War. He was taught from an early age to harbor anger and hatred for the other nations of Europe because of it, and when he was nine his mother took him to a Nazi rally to hear Hitler speak. Schmitt, like most in the crowd, was entranced by the oration. In 1936, when he was 16, he joined the Youth Corps and later graduated into the leagues of the SS.

Schmitt got his first Panzer command in the western push to occupy France, and later distinguished himself in the Russian campaign, where he earned 48 Soviet tank kills. When he turned 23, he was finally old enough to join the Leibstandarte—Adolf Hitler's personal elite guard—and was inducted into the order on the same night he received his Visitation from Vidar. Since then, he has served his father with as much dedication as he has served the Nazi Party, although he knows a few things about each that he does not volunteer to the other.

Roleplaying Hints: You are a paragon of perfection and you expect others to recognize that fact. The proper thing for them to do is acknowledge the superiority of your heritage and your training by accepting your dictates unquestioningly. You believe that those who cannot accept this hierarchy should be weeded out of the human race in order to make way for a golden age of humanity. This is not an attitude shared by your patron, but it is one which is shared by your commanding officers so sometimes you must balance your loyalties. At least for the time being, your duty is clear: destroy the enemies of the Reich.

Join Battle: 6

Dodge DV: 6

Birthrights: Schmitt's ceremonial dagger, given to him by his SS commander on behalf of Vidar, grants +1L and allows him to access the War Purview. His Knight's Cross medal, which he won for successful armored combat against the Russians, grants the Fire Purview. His five followers are experienced soldiers who serve as his tank crew. They are fanatically loyal and regularly receive his Jotunblut gift.

Other Notes: Schmidt's tank crew followers are experienced soldiers (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 283), each armed with an MP 38. Schmitt uses his Jotunblut Boons on each of them.

SCION
HERO

Name	Calling	Pantheon
SS-Sturmführer Klaus Schmitt	Panzer Commander	Aesir
Player	**Nature**	**God**
	Autocrat	Vidar

KLAUS SCHMITT

ATTRIBUTES

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●●○○○○○○	Charisma	●●○○○○○○○	Perception	●●●○○○○○○
Dexterity	●●●●○○○○○	Manipulation	●●●○○○○○○	Intelligence	●●○○○○○○○
Stamina	●●●●○○○○○	Appearance	●●○○○○○○○	Wits	●●●●○○○○○

ABILITIES

☐ Academics	○○○○○	☐ Craft	○○○○○	☐ Melee	●●●○○
☐ Animal Ken	○○○○○	☐	○○○○○	☐ Occult	●●○○○
☐ Art	○○○○○	☐	○○○○○	■ Politics	●○○○○
☐	○○○○○	☐ Empathy	●●○○○	☐ Presence	○○○○○
☐ Athletics	●●○○○	■ Fortitude	●●●○○	☐ Science	○○○○○
■ Awareness	●●○○○	☐ Integrity	●●○○○	☐	○○○○○
■ Brawl	●●●○○	■ Investigation	●○○○○	☐	○○○○○
☐ Command	●●●●○	☐ Larceny	○○○○○	■ Stealth	●●○○○
☐ Control (Tank)	●●●○○	☐ Marksmanship	●●●○○	☐ Survival	○○○○○
☐	○○○○○	☐ Medicine	○○○○○	☐ Thrown	○○○○○

BIRTHRIGHTS

Follower (Tank Crew) 1, Relic (Schutzstaffel Dagger–War, +2L) 3, Relic (Knight's Cross Medal – Fire) 1

WEAPONS

Clinch: Acc 7, Dmg 3B, Parry DV -, Spd 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Acc 6, Dmg 6B, Parry DV 3, Spd 5

Unarmed, Light: Acc 8, Dmg 3B, Parry DV 6, Spd 4

Luger: Acc 9, Dmg 4L, Rng 20, Clip 13, Spd 4, P

Schutzstaffel Dagger: Acc 8, Dmg 8L, Parry DV 5, Spd 4, P

KNACKS

Holy Rampage, Uplifting Might, Trick Shooter, Damage Conversion, Self Healing, Opening Gambit

BOONS

Blessing of Bravery

Fire Immunity

Human Endowment

WILLPOWER

●●●●●●○○○○

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

SOAK

A 2 L 4 B 7

ARMOR

Heavy Clothing

A ____ L ____ B 1

HEALTH

-0	-0	-0	-2	-2	-4	I
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

VIRTUES

Courage	●●●○○
Endurance	●●●○○
Expression	●○○○○
Loyalty	●●○○○

LEGEND

●●●○○○

○○○○○○

Legend Points 9 | ____

EXPERIENCE

KLAUS SCHMITT

MOTOKI KAMAYAKA
SCION OF RAIDEN

Kamayaka was raised to believe that one should be equal to one's peers, but unfortunately found that few people could be considered *his* peer. By his accounting, pilots are more important than infantry soldiers, soldiers are more important than civilians and Japanese civilians are more important than anyone else in the world. When he factors in his being the son of the great god Raiden, he doesn't see too many people crowding his airspace.

On the ground, he is reckless, cocky and condescending. In the air, he is a genius. He scoffs at the reprimands of his superior officers because he knows they cannot do without him. He has flown missions across the Pacific and throughout countless Godrealms. He can weave his way through enemy fire to dive-bomb with surgical position, and then come back around to outfox and out-fly even the most cunning enemy airmen.

Roleplaying Hints: In a highly structured and formal military society, you do not stand on structure or formality. You do what you do for fun and you know you are extremely good at it. The only thing better than shooting down your enemies is astonishing them with your skill—and then shooting them down. Although you pretend not to care what others think, it's just an act to make it seem as though you aren't even trying to be as amazing as you are.

Join Battle: 6

Dodge DV: 26

Birthrights: Raiden gave Kamayaka his arrow upon granting his visitation and Kamayaka carries it with him always, strapped to his hip like a sword so that he may channel the Sky Purview even after a bail-out. His sash, which Kamayaka wears under his flight suit, grants him a bonus to DV and access to the Guardian Purview. Kamayaka's followers consist of a flight crew of grunt soldiers (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 282) with Craft (Airplane Mechanics) 3 instead of their usual Medicine and Academics Abilities. The Tengu (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 323) usually poses as one of the flight crew but will accompany Kamayaka on special missions.

SCION
DEMIGOD

Motoki Kamayaka (Name)	Ace Fighter Pilot (Calling)	Amatsukami (Pantheon)
(Player)	Bravo (Nature)	Raiden (God)

MOTOKI KAMAYAKA

ATTRIBUTES

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●○○○○○○○○	Charisma	●●○○○○○○○○	Perception	●●●○○○○○○○
Dexterity	●●●●●●●○○○	Manipulation	●●●○○○○○○○	Intelligence	●●●○○○○○○○
Stamina	●●●○○○○○○○	Appearance	●●●●○○○○○○	Wits	●●●●●○○○○○

ABILITIES

☐ Academics	○○○○○	☐ Craft (Airplanes)	●●○○○	☐ Melee	●●●○○
☐ Animal Ken	○○○○○	☐	○○○○○	☐ Occult	●○○○○
☐ Art	○○○○○	☐	○○○○○	☐ Politics	○○○○○
☐	○○○○○	☐ Empathy	○○○○○	■ Presence	●●○○○
■ Athletics	●●●○○	■ Fortitude	●●○○○	■ Science	○○○○○
☐ Awareness	●○○○○	☐ Integrity	○○○○○	☐	○○○○○
■ Brawl	●●●○○	☐ Investigation	●●○○○	☐	○○○○○
☐ Command	○○○○○	☐ Larceny	●○○○○	☐ Stealth	●●○○○
☐ Control (Airplanes)	●●●●●	■ Marksmanship	●●●●○	☐ Survival	●●●○○
☐	○○○○○	☐ Medicine	○○○○○	☐ Thrown	●○○○○

BIRTHRIGHTS

- Follower (Flight Crew) 2,
- Follower (Tengu) 4,
- Relic (Goggles – Sun) 1,
- Relic (Raiden's Arrow – Sky), 1
- Relic (Sash – Guardian, +1 Dodge DV) 2

WEAPONS

- Clinch: Acc 10, Dmg 4B, Parry DV -, Spd 6, P
- Katana: Acc 11, Dmg 9L, Parry DV 26, Spd 5
- Nambu 8mm: Acc 11, Dmg 3L, Rng 20, Clip 8, Spd 5, P
- Unarmed, Heavy: Acc 9, Dmg 7B, Parry DV 23, Spd 5
- Unarmed, Light: Acc 11, Dmg 4B, Parry DV 26, Spd 4

KNACKS

Cat's Grace, Divine Balance, Escape Artist, Untouchable Opponent, Trick Shooter, Whirlwind Shield Dreadful Mien, Subliminal Warning, Meditative Focus

BOONS

Aegis, Cloud Sculptor, Flare Missile, Heavenly Flare, The Helpful Spirit, Penetrating Glare, Sky's Grace, Wind's Freedom

WILLPOWER

●●●●●●○○○○

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

SOAK

A____ L 2 B 4

ARMOR

Flack Jacket

A____ L 1 B 1

EXPERIENCE

VIRTUES

Duty	●●●○○
Endurance	●●○○○
Intellect	●○○○○
Valor	●●●●●

LEGEND

●●●●●●
●○○○○○

49 Legend Points

HEALTH

0	0	-1	-1	-2	-2	I
☐	■	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

MOTOKI KAMAYAKA

THE YANKEE PANTHEON

Virtues: Conviction, Duty, Intellect, Valor

The Yankee pantheon is quite possibly the youngest in existence, with most of its members less than two hundred years old. For this reason, many older Gods have made the mistake of underestimating them, but what the Yankees lack in experience and tradition, they more than make up for through vigor and innovation. By the conclusion of World War Two, few will question their preeminent power among nationalistic pantheons.

Like the mortal population of the United States, the Yankee pantheon is extremely diverse, serving as a melting pot for Gods of many different origins. Some, such as Columbia, are known offspring of Gods who traveled with immigrants from distant lands. Others, such as Br'er Rabbit, were indigenous deities swept into the mainstream pantheon as it developed around them. More than a few are of unknown origin, which has led some cosmologists (Loki most notable among them) to theorize that they are the spontaneous products of the collective ideals of the nation. Regardless of the diversity of their backgrounds, these Gods share an extremely progressive attitude, with individual members perpetually seeking the next breakthrough and striving for the next achievement. In this, they echo the Dodekatheon's idea of Arete—a connection easily explained by the fact that many of the Dodekatheon directly inspired or sired the nation's founders. But the Yankee sense of individuality is also tempered by a desire to bring about a better future both for the individual as well as the community. All too often, this "community" that is supposed to prosper along with the individual has been narrowly defined to exclude many of its own members, which leads to endless tension and even outright fighting among the Yankees. Still, above all this pantheon expresses optimism: the poor can be fed, the sick can be healed and any individual can achieve the American Dream.

America is replete with Axis Mundi connections to the Yankee Godrealm. Washington, DC alone holds dozens, with the White House, the Capitol, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence all within a few miles of one another. Some of the many sites throughout the country include the capitol buildings of each state, American Civil and Revolutionary War battlegrounds and the Hollywood sign. The sheer number and geographic range of these connection points make an inviting target for saboteurs and for the direct assault of small bands of Axis demigods and Gods.

Many Yankee Scions have been held back from the fighting to defend these national sites from a direct assault by enemy forces. This has led to an invisible war on American soil, but so far foreign pantheons have failed in every attempt to gain a beachhead.

For most of their existence, the Yankee Gods have been content with isolation, concerned only with their internal conflicts and collaborations. Now, the Amatsukami attack on their outpost in the Hawaiian realm, combined with the unbridled aggression demonstrated by the Aesir, has drawn them forth into a broader context. Those who know them and their abilities rejoice—or fear—that after this war the Yankee Gods will become permanently entwined in the affairs of the world.

BETSY ROSS

AKA: BETSY GRISCOM, MRS. STARS-AND-STRIPES, MOM

Description: Betsy Ross is a modest, conservatively-dressed, matronly woman who makes it her mission to support her nation's home front. She is famous for the creation of the original flag of the thirteen colonies, proving to George Washington that she could cut a five-pointed star with a single snip of her scissors. She is less well-known as a former Scion of Columbia, and though she lost both her first and second husbands in the Revolutionary War, she

continued to work tirelessly to support the colonial militia, serving as a nurse and tending to both American and British wounded soldiers before she ascended to Godhood. Some scholars question whether Betsy Ross can be attributed full credit for designing the flag of the thirteen colonies, but whatever the truth of that, her unquestionable dedication and resourcefulness has enshrined her as the all-American mother, helpmeet and nurturer.

As a domestic Goddess, Betsy Ross has never been inactive, but World War Two has inspired her to new levels of community participation. She has been working through churches, school boards and town councils to inspire people to do everything they can to support the war. She goes wherever people salute the flag, and she teaches them how they can contribute from their own homes by buying war bonds, recycling scrap metal and sending encouraging letters to the troops. She prefers to work with people one at a time, and people tend to listen to her (and not just because she always brings fresh apple pies).

Few Scions of Betsy Ross can be found on the front lines, but they make important contributions to the war nonetheless. They are community organizers, intelligence analysts and USO performers. They are the war mothers who make sure that everyone is well fed but that no food is wasted, and the young girls who send home-made cookies to the boys "over there." Their efforts, though not always directly recognized, have a real and direct impact on the United State's ability to wage war.

Associated Powers: Epic Dexterity, Epic Intelligence, Health, Industry

Abilities: Academics, Art, Craft, Empathy, Medicine, Politics

Rivals: Baba Yaga, Madame Guillotine, Rosie the Riveter

Enemies: Freya, Izanami, Tsuki-Yomi

BR'ER RABBIT
AKA: COYOTE, RASCALLY RABBIT

Description: Br'er Rabbit is by far the oldest God in the pantheon, though one might never guess it from his mischievous and sometimes childlike behavior. He is quick, sly and has an outstanding knack for getting into—and then out of—trouble. He is a bit of an iconoclast and prefers to target authority figures for his pranks, which can cause trouble within the pantheon but which makes him highly useful against the relentlessly authoritarian Axis. Originally, Rabbit was a God to the Cherokee people. Ironically, it was his tendency to stick up for the underdog that led him to attach himself to the domineering Yankee pantheon, because it was easy to find underdogs wherever they spread their empire. He worked with various Native American nations in the central plains against the aggressively expanding Federal government, and has also attached himself closely to the African American slaves of the southeast, where he guided them along the Underground Railroad for decades prior to the Civil War.

During World War Two, Br'er Rabbit has put his talents to use fighting the threat of totalitarianism abroad. He is a cunning spy and infinitely deft at infiltrating the ranks of other pantheons, who rarely know his history and tend to vastly underestimate his capabilities. He has talked his way past Heimdall into Asgard on at least two occasions, and each time he has returned with critical information on the Aesir's plans. He also excels at counter-intelligence, reveling in the opportunity to trick the tricksters.

Br'er Rabbit's Scions tend to come from poor families or disadvantaged minorities, and they tend to be quicker to run than to fight. In the war, they are spies, Navajo code-talkers and intelligence analysts. They enjoy sneaking behind enemy lines and living off their enemy's supplies. They will take risks to do seemingly silly things, such as deface German propaganda posters or put sugar in a fighter plane's gas tank. If they get caught, they are also the ones who coordinate the POWs and set up elaborate escape plans. There are more than a few Yankees who are glad to see these Scions pulling their tricks on someone else for a change.

Associated Powers: Epic Dexterity, Epic Manipulation, Epic Wits, Animal (Rabbit), Chaos, Industry

Abilities: Awareness, Empathy, Investigation, Larceny, Stealth, Survival

Rivals: The Citizen, Madame Guillotine, Uncle Sam

Enemies: Baldur, Loki, Marishiten

COLUMBIA
AKA: LADY LIBERTY, THE SPIRIT OF AMERICA

Description: Sister to Britannia and Marianne, Columbia is one of the daughters Athena charged with redefining mortal government. Named after the explorer Christopher Columbus, Columbia is the most pioneering of her sisters, preferring to stay on the move and always seeking something new. She is a patron of travelers and a protector of immigrants. When the nation was young, she traveled with Lewis and Clark on their expedition to the Pacific coast, and then returned to draw families out along the Oregon Trail. She can be extremely aggressive in her pursuits, and often overlooks how pressing for the future carries a human toll in the present. In the final analysis, her long-term gambles have paid off, and the optimism she imparts has driven many people to achieve dreams they never thought possible.

Columbia has seized the opportunities provided by the war to explore far-ranging corners of the World and the Overworld. She has travelled as a diplomat to Ville au Camp and Tír na nÓg, stationed troops at Iteru and the Palace of the Jade Emperor and led the invasion force to Mount Olympus. Wherever she travels, she goes with her eyes open, drinking in the new cultures and new ideas and always eager to find where she might go next.

Columbia's Scions lust for travel and adventure. They tend to take positions in the military or any other organization which can send them out around the world. They join the State Department as ambassadors to both friendly and enemy nations. More than a few are officers aboard aircraft carriers and troop transports that move through distant waters. They express unbridled optimism, but they are neither naive nor unprepared, as their past adventures have equipped them well for anything the future will bring.

Associated Powers: Epic Charisma, Epic Perception, Guardian, Industry, Psychopomp

Abilities: Awareness, Control, Fortitude, Investigation, Science, Survival

Rivals: Britannia, Pecos Bill, Rodina Mat

Enemies: Amaterasu, Freya, Susano-o

JOHN HENRY
AKA: THE LIVING STEAM HAMMER

Description: John Henry is a steel driving man—the biggest, strongest steel driving man ever to pound spikes for a transcontinental railroad. When some egghead from back East said he had a machine that could lay rail faster, Henry challenged the machine to save his job and the jobs of his crew. True to his word, he beat the machine —though it cost him. Most say he died from the labor, through some allow that he eventually recovered. In truth, this contest allowed him to achieve apotheosis as the Man Who Beat the Machine.

Some consider his hands-on approach to be an oddity in a pantheon dedicated to progress and innovation, but John Henry embodies characteristics equally essential to the American spirit: guts, hard work and pride. He isn't opposed to technological advancement—his labors were dedicated to building a transcontinental railroad, after all. Rather, he serves as a reminder that at the end of the day what really gets the job done is the blood and sweat of working class people. In the war, John Henry is a tireless warrior, ready to duke it out against any other God. With his enormous hammer he lays low his opponents or tears up their fortifications to make way for his own. Henry is also drawn to the use of fire and explosives, dating back to the days he laid dynamite to open tunnels for the railway. He outdoes whatever they throw at him, and if there is a cost to be paid, he will tally what he owes only after the job is done.

John Henry's Scions tend to approach life with a simple motto: "Knock me down eleven times, I'll get up a dozen." They are the war-widow single mothers who won't give up on their dreams and the factory laborers who set production records while braving hate crimes at work. Although African American soldiers were not always treated fairly by their superiors, Henry's Scions make damn sure they are among the first to charge the line. They are a tough lot, and each one is ready to finish the fight and damn all the consequences.

Associated Powers: Epic Strength, Epic Stamina, Fire, Industry

Abilities: Athletics, Brawl, Craft, Fortitude, Integrity, Melee

Rivals: d'Artagnan, John Bull, Paul Bunyan

Enemies: Hachiman, Heimdall, Hel, Raiden

JOHNNY APPLESEED
AKA: JOHN CHAPMAN

Description: Johnny Appleseed is a gentle God who holds all living things in reverence. Tradition has Johnny Appleseed scattering seeds at random, though in fact he carefully cultivated orchards and distributed the trees themselves rather than the seeds, often offering generous terms of credit to perspective buyers or even bartering for mere cornmeal or used clothing. He didn't seek profit, but instead made it his mission to provide food for the needy and sustainable agriculture for his nation. He remains an itinerant God, following the fruits of his orchard throughout the country and giving advice to pioneers and farmers as he goes.

Despite his pacifistic tendencies, Johnny Appleseed plays a crucial role in the war. As Napoleon said, an army marches on its stomach; that being the case, the armies of the United States need to do a lot of marching and, consequently, a lot of eating. Johnny Appleseed is the chief organizer and distributor of the needed supplies. He oversees the vast American operations to transform and preserve food as K-rations and mess hall grub, and then to deliver it to the farthest corners of the World, the Overworld and the Underworld.

Johnny Appleseed's Scions all live off the land in some way. While they do not make the greatest soldiers, they excel at food production. They are farmers, ranchers, veterinarians, doctors, aid workers and preachers. Most are extremely knowledgeable about what it takes to grow food and what it takes to nourish living beings, both physically and spiritually. They tend to be very pious people, very giving of themselves, and are frequently vegetarians. Nothing frustrates them more than the thought of someone going without food, and even if they are starving they will still share their bread.

Associated Powers: Epic Charisma, Fertility, Health, Industry

Abilities: Animal Ken, Craft (Farming), Empathy, Medicine, Science, Survival

Rivals: Baba Yaga, The Citizen, Uncle Sam

Enemies: Freyr, Hel, Izanagi, Izanami, Tsuki-Yomi

PAUL BUNYAN
AKA: BIG PAUL

Description: Big man, big beard, big axe, big ox—everything about Paul Bunyan is big. By the early twentieth century, lumberjacks in the East and Midwest were circulating stories about Bunyan's incredible size and strength. They said he could do the work of a hundred other loggers, and eat a hundred times as many pancakes, too. They also said that he built mountains by piling stones around his campfire, dug the Grand Canyon by dragging his axe behind him as he walked and made Minnesota's ten thousand lakes with his feet and the hooves of his gigantic pet ox, Babe.

Some suppose that Paul Bunyan was a Scion turned working-class hero, much like John Henry. Others suspect that he is an ancient Earth God who took on a new visage when he joined the Yankee pantheon. Whatever the case, Bunyan and his ox are now revered by their people. Their combined ability to alter the landscape is also a highly prized asset in war, allowing the Yankees to re-define the battlefield itself.

Every one of Paul Bunyan's Scions is uncommonly large and strong. During peacetime, many become professional athletes or manual laborers of widespread fame and success. But in the armed services, they are best suited to join the Army Corps of Engineers. They are the ones who redirect the flow of rivers, build up or tear down bunkers and trenches, construct tank traps and build bridges across chasms that the enemy thought never could be crossed. No one can dig deeper, cut faster or eat more than Bunyan's children.

Associated Powers: Epic Strength, Epic Stamina, Epic Intelligence, Animal (Ox), Earth, Industry

Abilities: Animal Ken, Athletics, Craft, Fortitude, Melee, Science

Rivals: The Citizen, d'Artagnan, John Henry

Enemies: Freyr, Hachiman, Susano-o

PECOS BILL

AKA: THE COWBOY

Description: As far as anyone knows, Pecos Bill was never born: he simply rode in out of the desert, a fully fledged God of cowboys. He is the quickest draw, the slyest cowpoke and the rootinest, tootinest hombre in the Wild West. He has saddled a tornado, used a rattle-snake as a bull whip and hog-tied a giant bear. But for all that, he is a consummate loner, and due either to his own rugged individuality or to simple bad luck, he is unable to form any long-lasting relationships with anyone other than his horse, Widowmaker.

Pecos Bill is indispensible in the war. He is extremely talented as a scout and is able to move far and wide on his steed, investigating enemy territory and surviving under even the most inhospitable landscapes of the Overworld. He doesn't always work well with others, but he can pull off the most challenging jobs and survive the most insane risks, usually with an exuberant whoop and holler and an inimitable sense of flair.

Pecos Bill's Scions are charismatic and deft, but they are still uncomfortable working with others. They volunteer for service as lone operatives, often far from the oversight of their superiors. This makes them excellent army scouts, paratroopers, fighter pilots and couriers. Although they frequently have difficulty taking orders and their personal relationships end in tragedy, nobody is better at working solo to achieve the impossible than the Scions of The Cowboy.

Associated Powers: Epic Dexterity, Epic Stamina, Epic Charisma, Animal (Coyote, Horse), Industry, Psychopomp

Abilities: Animal Ken, Athletics, Control, Fortitude, Marksmanship, Survival

Rivals: The Citizen, d'Artagnan, Johnny Appleseed, Robin Hood, Uncle Sam

Enemies: Raiden, Susano-o, Tyr, Thor

ROSIE THE RIVETER

AKA: THE SUFFRAGETTE, WENDY THE WELDER

Description: Rosie first manifested as an agitator for women's rights in the mid eighteen-hundreds. Although initially shunned, she continued to press her revolutionary platform until the passing of the 19th amendment of the Constitution, and is now taking the war as an opportunity to redefine perceptions of women. Her rebellious spirit and uncompromising opinions often create conflicts within her pantheon. She is the rebel among rebels, constantly pressing all her peers to the next level of social reform, regardless of what upheaval may come with it.

In World War Two, Rosie has been instrumental in bringing women into the workforce to replace the young men who have shipped overseas. Her influence contributed to over sixty million women gaining employment manufacturing arms, ammunition and other battlefield necessities. More importantly to her, she has changed the common perception of the capabilities of women, with many of female workers now having mastered some of the most difficult and exhausting jobs available. Even so, this is not enough: women factory workers are still paid far less than their male counterparts, and there is the strong likelihood that the end of the war will see returning servicemen replace many of the positions now held by women. Still, Rosie will never rest until women are allowed to contribute their full potential to society.

Rosie the Riveter's Scions are almost exclusively women. They are fearless social activists who work long hours in the factories by day and campaign for wage equality while off duty. Others of her Scions seek to get as close to the front lines as they can, sometimes serving as WACs or army nurses. Her servicewomen daughters can wield a rifle as well as any man, and if their positions happen to be overrun, they will make sure they are the last to retreat.

Associated Powers: Epic Strength, Epic Stamina, Epic Intelligence, Industry

Abilities: Academics, Command, Craft, Fortitude, Integrity, Politics

Rivals: Betsy Ross, Britannia, Madame Guillotine, Rodina Mat, Uncle Sam

Enemies: Frig, Loki, Izanami, Marishiten

UNCLE SAM

AKA: BROTHER JONATHAN, YANKEE DOODLE

Description: Uncle Sam is the elected president of the Yankee Pantheon and the quintessential representative of the United States of America. His divine origins are unknown, but he has been around long enough to have been a hero of the Revolutionary War, and he has stated

that his parents traveled aboard the Mayflower. He embodies the power and responsibilities that accompany citizenship, and stands as a reminder that freedom isn't free. At all times he carries a complete copy of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States of America.

During this war, as with past wars, Uncle Sam works politically to organize and strategize the war effort. His chief role is to remind citizens of their patriotic obligations, especially by encouraging young men to join the ranks of the armed forces. He and his country have never been in greater need, but he has never lost a war yet and isn't going to let the American people down now.

Perhaps because of his puritanical origins, Uncle Sam never sires Scions of his own, but is always on the lookout to recruit the best and the brightest for adoption. His adopted Scions tend to find their way into leadership roles as brilliant generals in shiny silver helmets, honest and hardworking politicians and sharp field commanders. They are, as a rule, very dedicated and self-sacrificing individuals who are driven to great lengths in the service of their country and who inspire others to do the same.

Associated Powers: Epic Intelligence, Epic Manipulation, Animal (Eagle), Guardian, Industry, Justice, War

Abilities: Command, Fortitude, Integrity, Marksmanship, Politics, Presence

Rivals: Baba Yaga, The Citizen, Rodina Mat, Rosie the Riveter

Enemies: Baldur, Freyr, Loki, Susano-o

NEW BOON: STORM THE GATES

This Boon was first used by the Axis Pantheons to open the way for their rank-and-file to enter and seize foreign Godrealms. Since the start of the war, this power has been used even more frequently by Yankee Gods and demigods leading armies into the Overworld to liberate those same Godrealms. Because of the central role of Axis Mundi connection points, Psychopomps with this Boon are extremely prized officers in all of the major celestial armies.

STORM THE GATES (PSYCHOPOMP •••••)

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Command

Cost: 1 Legend per 2 units

This Boon allows a Psychopomp to open an Axis Mundi connection point to those who might not normally be able to pass through it. The user of this Boon must first be in the immediate presence of an active Axis Mundi connection point and must meet all the criteria for moving through the gate. If the Psychopomp would normally need to use another Boon to pass through the connection, the cost of that Boon is added to the cost of using Storm the Gates.

When activated, this power opens a rippling portal through which even mortals and vehicles can pass into the Overworld. For each success rolled, the gate is wide enough for one unit to cross over. A "unit" may consist of either eight fully-equipped soldiers or 2 points of vehicle Mass. Thus, if a Scion with Epic Intelligence rolled 15 successes, she would open the way for 120 foot soldiers, or 5 tanks, or potentially even one small battleship. A vehicle may carry its full compliment of passengers and crew as it crosses over. The Scion may repeatedly use this Boon as long as she can continue to pay the Legend cost for each unit sent through, but may not send through any vehicle with a Mass exceeding the number of successes on a given roll—you can't send half a B-17 through one minute and half the next minute.

This power does not alter in any way where the connection point opens in the Overwold, so troops may still need some other way to scale the vast mountain, climb the cosmic tree, navigate the celestial oceans or deal with whatever other environment awaits them at the other end.

PANTHEON PURVIEW: INDUSTRY

The name of this Purview refers less to the manufacturing system of the United States and more to the hard work, resourcefulness and progressiveness that created that system. As is fitting for a modern pantheon, the powers of this Purview apply to the tools and devices of the modern world. The Industry Purview allows its user to do more and be more through the improvement of both techniques and technology.

WORK HARDER (INDUSTRY •)

Dice Pool: Stamina + Survival

Cost: 1 Legend + 1 Willpower

To be industrious, one must sometimes be prepared to dig deep, take a few hard knocks or burn the candle at both ends. This Boon gives the Scion endurance enough to make long marches or continue working without sleep. The Scion using this power reduces fatigue penalties by 1 for each success rolled. This penalty reduction lasts for 12 hours, at which point the Scion may pay the cost and re-activate the power if he so chooses.

WORK SMARTER (INDUSTRY ••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 Legend

An industrious person knows to seek time-saving innovations wherever possible. By finding just the right balance in the materials, handling the tools in a more efficient way or finding the most advantageous location for the project, this Boon allows a Scion to intuit the most productive way to work. Using Work Smarter allows the Scion to double the speed with which he performs one type of repetitive manual labor such as stacking sandbags, digging a foxhole or peeling potatoes. This

does not grant the user greater strength or the ability to physically move faster, but rather imparts knowledge of the best way to go about the task. This intuition cannot be communicated or shared with others—it would take longer to explain the technique than it would to just do it. This power cannot be used for complicated or unpredictable labors, such as repairing an engine, foraging for food or most anything that requires an Ability roll. Although walking and running may be repetitive physical tasks, this Boon cannot be used to accelerate travel; the way to work smarter at covering ground is to get a vehicle.

This power applies to one task and lasts for one scene, at which time the intuition fades or the work conditions are no longer so favorable. The Scion may spend an additional Legend to perform a new task more efficiently or to extend the power through a subsequent scene.

FIXIT (INDUSTRY •••)

Dice Pool: Perception + Craft

Cost: 1 Legend

Anyone who wants to get more out of modern life needs to know how to get more out of modern machines. With only the bang of a hammer and a few twists of a screwdriver, a Scion with this Boon may spend 2 Legend to repair even the most grievously damaged equipment or vehicles almost instantly. The player may repair a number of health levels equal to the number of successes on the roll. The Scion can use this Boon on any given object only once per day, but he can use it on as many different objects in the same day as he can afford to spend the Legend points. Items may not be repaired beyond their original maximum number of health levels, and this Boon has no effect on an item which has been reduced to zero or fewer health levels.

GREMLINS (INDUSTRY ••••)

Dice Pool: Charisma + Integrity

Cost: 2 Legend

When there is just no explaining why a machine malfunctions, you can always blame it on gremlins. But gremlins aren't all bad: sometimes they get the other guy. Using this Boon allows the Scion to send invisible spirits of entropy into one visible piece of mechanical equipment such as an engine, a gun or a time bomb. These gremlins jam gears, cross wires, loosen hoses and generally cause the machine to go on the fritz, but only for a limited amount of time. The Scion may choose to prevent the machine's operation for a number of ticks up to double the number of successes scored on the roll. The Scion must declare the length of the delay at the outset, and the machine resumes normal functions at the expiration of that time. It is unlikely to be long enough to cause a plane to fall to Earth, but it can provide the critical seconds needed to charge a machine gun or throw back a grenade.

The operator of the item may attempt to fix the problem before the item would normally resume functioning. To do so, the character must roll (Wits + Craft) and accumulate at least as many successes as the Boon's user. This Boon has no effect on equipment crafted by characters of higher Legend.

SUPPLY CHAIN (INDUSTRY •••••)

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Politics

Cost: 4 Legend

It is no easy task to supply an army consisting of hundreds of thousands of soldiers spread out across the globe. Acquiring the material, processing it and transporting it to keep each soldier equipped with everything from food and ammunition to boots to prophylactics is a truly epic accomplishment of logistics. It boils down to this: the army that gets what it needs will win, and the one that doesn't will crumble.

Supply Chain allows a Scion to just happen to have received a recent supply of whatever he needs at the moment. When activating this power, the Scion decides on one small item, which could be anything from a clip of ammunition to clean socks to a roll of currency for whatever country you happen to be liberating this week. The only limitation is that the item must be small enough to fit inside a pocket.

The Scion using this Boon must have a pocket from which to produce the item, so someone who has been stripped down and sent to a POW camp cannot call upon this power until he reclaims his original gear. A single success is enough to acquire any item, but should a Scion fail, he cannot use this Boon to produce that particular item again until after he has returned to base or received a new supply dump in the field. He may use this power to produce other items during that time, but once he comes up short on a particular item he stays short. A botch on the roll means that the character cannot use this power at all until he has been resupplied in the usual way.

FIRE IN THE BELLY (INDUSTRY ••••• •)

Dice Pool: Stamina + Fortitude

Cost: 1 Willpower + 2 Legend per dot of Virtue added

Keeping ahead of the competition demands tremendous drive and dedication. This power allows the Scion to temporarily boost that passion in times of great need. For each success rolled, the Scion may temporarily add one dot to a Virtue, to a maximum of five dots in any given Virtue. These dots may be distributed between the Scion's Virtues in any way the player sees fit, but each dot costs the Scion 2 Legend. The player may choose to add fewer Virtue dots than he rolled successes, and must pay the Legend cost only for dots added. These bonuses last one day, although a player may extend them for an additional day by spending one additional Willpower. The player may continue to renew this power as long as he can pay the Willpower cost.

JURY RIG (INDUSTRY ••••• ••)

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Craft

Cost: 5 Legend

Resources are scarce in times of war, so enterprising individuals know to "use it up, wear it out; make it do or do without." Salvaging vehicles and weapons wherever possible is a very cost-effective way of keeping ahead of the enemy.

With this Boon, the Scion affects miraculous repairs on the remnants of an object that has been reduced to zero or fewer health levels. A single success on the roll returns the object to 1 health level, no matter how badly damaged it was. However, the item is shaky and does not operate to its fullest potential. Any user will suffer -4 to all rolls using this device (thus, weapons suffer -4 accuracy and vehicles suffer -4 maneuverability). This penalty is in addition to any other penalty normally associated with that item, including penalties for damage. For each threshold success when activating this Boon, this penalty is reduced by 1, to a minimum of 0.

All of the pieces of the item must be present for Jury Rig to work. If pieces are missing or incinerated, the Storyteller may impose additional penalties to its use. However, pieces from identical vehicles or equipment may be cannibalized to complete the item. For example, a tank which has an incinerated left tread isn't going to be able to move—except, perhaps, in circles. But a tread salvaged from the same model tank and piled on the wrecked heap will allow the Scion to Jury Rig a fully functional (if somewhat worse for wear) tank.

An item repaired in this way is restored to a single health level, but it may be further repaired through the use of the Fixit Boon.

ASSEMBLY LINE (INDUSTRY ••••• •••)

Dice Pool: Wits + Craft

Cost: 10 Legend

So resourceful is the Scion that he can create nearly anything with only a few raw resources, and can mass produce equipment with the wave of a hand.

The player may choose to build any standard weapon, vehicle or piece of equipment, or common structures such as buildings and bridges. To create the desired item, the God must first assemble raw materials equal to the mass of the items to be constructed. Up to 25 percent of this material may be improvised from whatever is at hand, including bricks, trees, old boots and so forth. At least 75 percent of the materials must be of the kind used in the manufacture of the item—most often this means steel or some other alloy. Earth Creation (**Scion: God**, p. 87) can greatly assist in this process, or the God may recycle from scrapped vehicles, buildings and the like.

Once all the raw materials have been assembled, the player may activate this Boon. Each success grants the item one health level, as though it were being repaired from zero health levels. If the God rolls extra successes and has enough available materials, he may create multiple identical items. Consult "Attacking Inanimate Objects" (**Scion: Hero**, p. 201), "Vehicles" (**Scion: Hero**, p. 205), "Spears of Destiny, Chariots of Fire" (pp. 131-134) and "Military Equipment" (pp. 266-270) to determine the number of health levels an item might have. If the player does not roll enough successes to bring the item to its full capacity, it still functions but is considered incomplete, limited to the number of health levels initially granted through this Boon. No other Boon or Ability can repair the incomplete item above the number of health levels granted by the use of this Boon, and the item will function as though "damaged" if it has fewer than half of the health levels typical for its type. The God may use Assembly Line on an item any number of times, each time raising its maximum health levels by the number of successes scored, to the maximum of the standard number for that item.

Provided that enough materials are available, Assembly Line can be used to mass produce identical items. To do so, divide the number of successes by the maximum health levels of the items to be produced. For example, if a player scored 10 successes, his character could create 5 hand grenades with 2 health levels each, or 1 motorcycle with 10 health levels, or 2 Garand rifles with 4 health levels each (with the option of also creating a defective rifle with only 2 health levels). For the purpose of creation by this Boon, assume that sixteen bullets have one health level and one artillery shell has 4 health levels.

INNOVATE (INDUSTRY ••••• ••••)

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Craft

Cost: 10 Legend + 1 Willpower (or 10 Legend + 1 Willpower *dot*)

The character with this Boon is so innovative that there is virtually no device which he cannot improve, no matter how advanced or time-tested the original design. With a little tinkering, the God might shave firing pins to speed a gun's attack, mix in the right fuel additives to boost a vehicle's speed or improve the slope of a tank's armor to make it even tougher. By concentrating on an item for one action, each two successes rolled (rounded up) allows the player to add a +1 bonus to one of that item's traits such as damage, accuracy, health levels, armor or maneuverability. No item may receive more than a total bonus of +5 for all traits combined, which means a vehicle could gain +3 armor and +2 health levels, but not +5 to each. Bonuses may also be divided between identical items. Each item beyond the first requires a separate action and costs 5 additional Legend. The God must not be interrupted while using Innovate, so if he performs another action or even defends himself against attack then none of the items receive a bonus.

If the player spends one Willpower point and ten Legend points when he activates this Boon, the effects of Innovate last for a single scene. If the God sacrifices a permanent Willpower dot for each item modified, the effects are permanent.

THE PROJECT (INDUSTRY ••••• •••••)

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Science

Cost: 20 Legend + 1 Willpower

Contrary to assumption, the development of the Yankee's top-secret super-weapon is not being carried out only by a small clutch of bespectacled scientists locked in a room somewhere in New Mexico. It is actually the single largest and most expensive industrial project ever undertaken, utilizing more workers and factory equipment than all of the automobile manufacturers in the United States combined. With this Boon, a Yankee God can tap into the power of this experiment to produce a prototype weapon. Even this small sample can be so devastating that the Gods themselves fear to call it forth.

To use this Boon, the God must concentrate for 5 ticks, during which time he is considered defenseless. Upon completion of this action, the God brings into being a large, lumpy metal sphere about four feet in diameter and weighing four hundred pounds. Exactly sixteen ticks later, the device detonates with a searing blast that can potentially be seen for miles. Anyone or anything caught in the explosion suffer 5L of fire damage and 1A of soul-searing radiation for each success on the Boon user's (Intelligence + Science) roll. This damage is not rolled; it is simply applied directly to each character within range. It cannot be dodged or parried, but it may be soaked. The damage is reduced by 5L and 1A for every 50 feet the blast travels from the epicenter.

SCIONS OF THE YANKEE PANTHEON

The Yankee Gods favor vigorous, determined people, and generally prefer to help those who prove ready and willing to help themselves. The Scion of Uncle Sam is a sample beginning hero-level Scion, and the Scion of John Henry is a sample demigod-level Scion.

LT. SAMUEL WASHINGTON
SCION OF UNCLE SAM

Sam Washington grew up in rural Iowa, passing his time hunting, fishing and living off the land. During the Great Depression, his family of farmers was so poor that Sam did not own a pair of shoes until he was ten years old, and he did not see printed currency until he was fifteen. Still, he proved himself a fierce competitor in high school, earning several distinctions for both athletics and academics. He never thought much about his future, and had no plans to attend college despite his scholarship victories. He was content simply to be the best in his town, and found that milestone easy enough to achieve.

The morning after Pearl Harbor was bombed, Washington set out for the army recruiter. He had to hitch-hike to get to the nearest recruiting office, and along the way he was given a lift by an avuncular but serious-faced man in a wildly outdated stovepipe hat. This was Uncle Sam himself, and it was then that he revealed Washington's divine parentage and told him he wanted Washington for special service to his country. Uncle Sam suggested that Washington join the newly-founded, ultra-elite branch of army paratroopers, and Washington took him up on the deal.

Training was rigorous. Though on several occasions Washington sincerely believed he might die from exertion, it never occurred to him that he might quit, even as droves of other men washed out of the program. After a few months, the officers had a hard time keeping up with the men, which is when Washington got the offer to attend Officer Candidate School. The army broke its tradition by assigning him as a lieutenant to his original group, so by the time the division transferred to England, Washington was leading the very men he had enlisted with.

Washington and his men had their first combat experience on D-Day. As if clearing the way for the invasion force and wreaking havoc with the German troops weren't enough of a challenge, Uncle Sam also uses Washington in special operations relating to the capture or destruction of Axis Mundi connection points. Lt. Sam Washington of the 101st, "Easy Company," is now essentially fighting two wars: one to free Europe, and one to free the Overworld. That's all right with him, because he's confident he can win both.

Roleplaying Hints: You are a grizzled veteran of heavy combat, which makes you seem gruff and jaded to others. It isn't that you are heartless—far from it, as you will go to any length to protect the innocent from the tyranny and murder that inevitably follows in the wake of the enemy's advances. However, you are a realist who knows that this fight is going to require some tough decisions and some sacrifices. It is going to get ugly, but you know that you're just about the best qualified to put a stop to it.

Join Battle: 6

Dodge DV: 5

Birthrights: When he graduated Ranger training, Uncle Sam presented Washington with his 101st division "Screamin' Eagle" insignia patch. This patch enables Washington to access the War Purview. His helmet provides access to the Guardian Purview and adds +1L soak. Washington also received the Thompson SMG that had once belonged to the lawman Eliot Ness, Washington's childhood hero. Although the gun appears slightly outdated, it has been customized for increased power and ease of use, gaining +1 damage and -1 speed.

SCION
HERO

Name	Calling	Pantheon
Lt. Samuel Washington	Airborn Ranger	Yankee
Player	**Nature**	**God**
	Competitor	Uncle Sam

SAMUEL WASHINGTON

ATTRIBUTES

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●●○○○○○○	Charisma	●●○○○○○○○	Perception	●●○○○○○○○
Dexterity	●●●○○○○○○	Manipulation	●●●○○○○○○	Intelligence	●●○○○○○○○
Stamina	●●●○○○○○○	Appearance	●●○○○○○○○	Wits	●●●○○○○○○

ABILITIES

□ Academics	○○○○○	□ Craft	○○○○○	□ Melee	○○○○○
□ Animal Ken	○○○○○	□	○○○○○	□ Occult	○○○○○
□ Art	○○○○○	□	○○○○○	■ Politics	○○○○○
□	○○○○○	□ Empathy	●○○○○	■ Presence	●●○○○
□ Athletics	●●●○○	■ Fortitude	●●●○○	□ Science	○○○○○
□ Awareness	●●●○○	■ Integrity	●●●○○	□	○○○○○
□ Brawl	●●○○○	□ Investigation	○○○○○	□	○○○○○
■ Command	●●●○○	□ Larceny	○○○○○	□ Stealth	●●○○○
□ Control	○○○○○	■ Marksmanship	●●●●○	□ Survival	●●○○○
□	○○○○○	□ Medicine	○○○○○	□ Thrown	●●○○○

BIRTHRIGHTS

Relic (Polished Helmet – Guardian, +1L soak) 1,
Relic (Screamin' Eagle patch – War) 1, Relic
(Ness' Tommy Gun – +1 dam, -1 speed) 2

WEAPONS

Clinch: Acc 5, Dmg 5B, Parry DV -, Spd 6, P
Grenade: Acc 5, Dmg 15L, Rng 15/10 (direct/indirect), Spd 5
Unarmed, Heavy: Acc 4, Dmg 8B, Parry DV 3, Spd 5
Unarmed, Light: Acc 6, Dmg 5B, Parry DV 4, Spd 4
Ness' Tommy Gun – Acc 10, Dmg 5L, Rng 30, Clip 30, Spd 4, P

KNACKS

Lightning Sprinter, Monkey
Climber, Untouchable Opponent,
Overt Order

BOONS

Aegis
Blessing of Bravery
Warrior Ideal

WILLPOWER

●●●●●●●○○○

SOAK

A____ L 4 B 5

ARMOR

Helmet and Fatigues
A____ L 1 B 1

HEALTH

-0	-1	-1	-2	-2	-4	I
□	□	□	□	□	□	□

VIRTUES

Conviction	●○○○○
Duty	●●●●○
Intellect	●○○○○
Valor	●●●○○

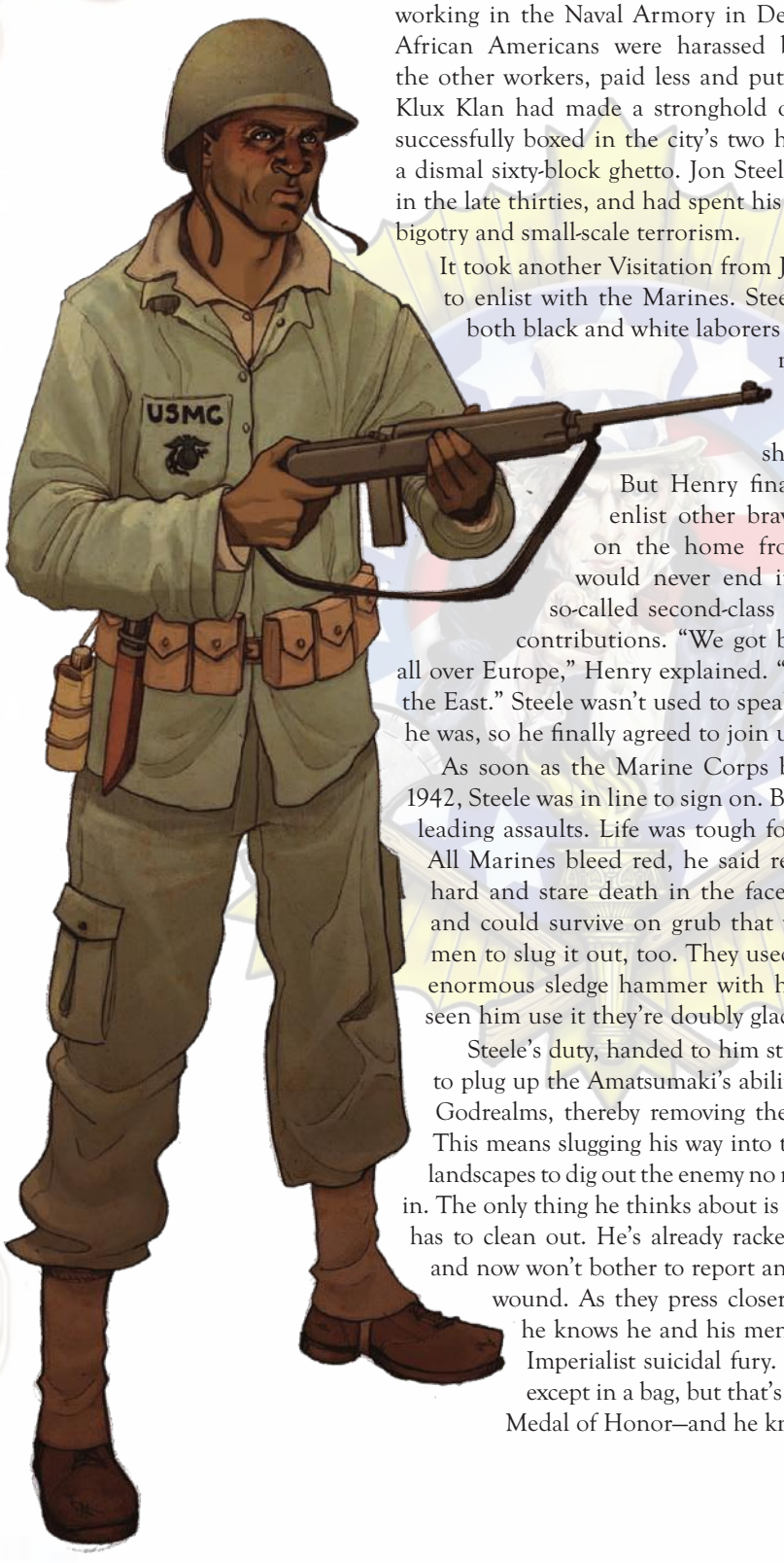
LEGEND

●●●●○○
○○○○○○

Legend Points 16 | ____

EXPERIENCE

SGT. JONATHAN STEELE
SCION OF JOHN HENRY



Like his divine father, Jon Steele is a steel driving man. He got his start working in the Naval Armory in Detroit, where he and his small crew of African Americans were harassed by white coworkers, segregated from the other workers, paid less and put on the most dangerous jobs. The Ku Klux Klan had made a stronghold of Detroit since the twenties and had successfully boxed in the city's two hundred thousand black residents into a dismal sixty-block ghetto. Jon Steele had received his Visitation way back in the late thirties, and had spent his earlier years fighting against the Klan's bigotry and small-scale terrorism.

It took another Visitation from John Henry himself to convince Steele to enlist with the Marines. Steele argued that the war-time influx of both black and white laborers into the shipyards was contributing to more racial tension than ever. Besides that, he was already contributing to the war effort by being the best damn ship-builder the Navy had on its payroll. But Henry finally won the debate by promising to enlist other brave people to deal with the problems on the home front, and by arguing that their fight would never end if people couldn't see that America's so-called second-class citizens were ready to make first class contributions. "We got brothers shooting and bombing Nazis all over Europe," Henry explained. "I need you to bust down the doors in the East." Steele wasn't used to speaking with anyone more stubborn than he was, so he finally agreed to join up.

As soon as the Marine Corps began enlisting African Americans in 1942, Steele was in line to sign on. By 1944, he and his all-black squad were leading assaults. Life was tough for Marines of any color in the Pacific. All Marines bleed red, he said repeatedly, and they all have to march hard and stare death in the face. The fact that Steele never got tired and could survive on grub that would make a goat puke inspired his men to slug it out, too. They used to think he was crazy for lugging his enormous sledge hammer with him everywhere, but now that they've seen him use it they're doubly glad he's on their side.

Steele's duty, handed to him straight from Uncle Sam's war council, is to plug up the Amatsumaki's ability to move in and out of their captured Godrealms, thereby removing their ability to flank the American Navy. This means slugging his way into the most bizarre and often inhospitable landscapes to dig out the enemy no matter how deep they burrow themselves in. The only thing he thinks about is the next objective, the next hell-hole he has to clean out. He's already racked up more awards than he can count, and now won't bother to report any injury less severe than a sucking chest wound. As they press closer and closer to the Japanese mainland, he knows he and his men are being fed into the meat-grinder of Imperialist suicidal fury. He doesn't expect to ever return home except in a bag, but that's fine with him. He's resolved to earn the Medal of Honor—and he knows it's usually granted posthumously.

Roleplaying Hints: "Tough as nails" isn't an adequate phrase to illustrate your mental resolve—maybe "tough as railroad spikes" is a little more fitting. To you, there is no problem that cannot be overcome through sheer force of will. It isn't that you don't get hurt or scared, it's that these feelings are insubstantial compared to your drive to finish your task. You don't go looking for command but your unflagging determination can be an inspiration to those around you and you often find your peers looking to you for how to proceed.

Join Battle: 6

Dodge DV: 6

Birthrights: Steele's C&O hammer was one that John Henry himself used to lay track for the railroad. Not only does its unusual weight give it +2 damage, it also focuses the user's will into a sharp point, making the hammer capable of dealing lethal damage as though each blow were driving a railroad spike into its target. Steele's Zippo lighter is gold-plated with an inscribed line "Life for me ain't been no crystal stair," taken from a Langston Hughes poem. This lighter grants access to the Fire purview, and Steele uses it when lighting everything from cigarettes to dynamite fuses. Steele also travels with his 15-man platoon of experienced marines. Although they are often assigned a commissioned officer, they look to Steele for leadership.

Other Notes: Jon Steele's sledgehammer does lethal damage instead of bashing damage.

SCION
DEMIGOD

Name	Calling	Pantheon
Sgt. Jonathan Steele	Leatherneck	Yankee
Player	**Nature**	**God**
	Fanatic	John Henry

JONATHAN STEELE

ATTRIBUTES

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●●●●●●○○○	Charisma	●●○○○○○○○○	Perception	●●●○○○○○○○
Dexterity	●●○○○○○○○○	Manipulation	●●●○○○○○○○	Intelligence	●●●●○○○○○○
Stamina	●●●●●●●○○○	Appearance	●●●●○○○○○○	Wits	●●●●○○○○○○

ABILITIES

☐ Academics	○○○○○	■ Craft (Masonry)	●●○○○	■ Melee	●●●●●
☐ Animal Ken	○○○○○	☐	○○○○○	☐ Occult	○○○○○
☐ Art	○○○○○	☐	○○○○○	☐ Politics	○○○○○
☐	○○○○○	☐ Empathy	○○○○○	☐ Presence	○○○○○
■ Athletics	●●●●○	■ Fortitude	●●●●●	☐ Science	○○○○○
☐ Awareness	●●○○○	■ Integrity	●●●●●	☐	○○○○○
■ Brawl	●●●●○	☐ Investigation	○○○○○	☐	○○○○○
☐ Command	○○○○○	☐ Larceny	○○○○○	☐ Stealth	●●○○○
☐ Control	○○○○○	☐ Marksmanship	●●●●○	☐ Survival	●●●○○
☐	○○○○○	☐ Medicine	○○○○○	☐ Thrown	●●●○○

BIRTHRIGHTS

Followers (15 man platoon) 5,

Relic (C&O Hammer – Lethal Damage, +2L) 4,

Relic (Zippo Lighter – Fire) 1

WEAPONS

C&O Hammer: Acc 7, Dmg 17L, Parry DV 8, Spd 5, P

Clinch: Acc 6, Dmg 8B, Parry DV -, Spd 6, P

M1 Garand: Acc 9, Dmg 8L, Rng 150, Clip 8, Spd 5, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Acc 5, Dmg 11B, Parry DV 4, Spd 5

Unarmed, Light: Acc 7, Dmg 8B, Parry DV 7, Spd 4

KNACKS

Crushing Grip, Divine Rampage, Divine Wrath, Holy Rampage, Hurl to the Horizon, Shockwave, Devourer, Divine Fortitude, Holy Fortitude, Inner Furnace, Regeneration, Self-Healing

BOONS

Fire Immunity

Gremlins

Work Smarter

WILLPOWER

●●●●●●●●●○

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

SOAK

A 6 L 21 B 24

ARMOR

Helmet and Fatigues

A ___ L 1 B 1

EXPERIENCE

VIRTUES

Conviction	●●●●●
Duty	●●○○○
Intellect	●○○○○
Valor	●●○○○

LEGEND

●●●●●●○○○○○

49 Legend Points

HEALTH

0	0	0	0	0	0	I
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	■
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
☐	☐	☐	☐	■	■	
■	■	■	■	■	■	

JONATHAN STEELE

THE ALLIED PANTHEONS

Virtues: Conviction, Duty, Endurance, Valor

The Allied pantheons are just that: a collection of nationalist pantheons who might never find themselves in cooperation except in the face of an overwhelming mutual threat. None of the old Gods predicted that these would be the pantheons to stand up to the Axis, although this dismissive attitude may have been the reason why the allies were left alone just long enough to prepare their defenses.

The Gods of the Allied pantheons do not identify themselves as a single entity. In better times, each of these pantheons have gone to war with the others, and many now see the alliance as a shaky thing born from the most extreme necessity. When—and if—the Axis is defeated, the Allied pantheons are very likely to revert to old prejudices.

Each of these pantheons hosts many Gods who are not included below. Some of the absent Gods are not warlike enough to impact the fighting, and others are simply not active at this point in history. Many have been driven into hiding, beaten into submission or bound from their power by the Axis Gods. The Gods described here are those doing the most to oppose the Axis threat.

THE BRITISH PANTHEON

The British pantheon is proud and stalwart, and for a time they stood alone against the Aesir. Their aggressive colonialism throughout the world has drawn the enmity of the Amatsukami and many others, but it has left them with footholds in many influential realms.

Although the fighting has wearied them almost to the point of defeat, they are protected by the isolated nature of their Godrealm. Like that of the other nationalist pantheons, the British Axis Mundi is connected to the national monuments and historical artifacts of their country, including Westminster Abbey, Big Ben, the Crown Jewels and the Magna Carta. Unlike other nationalistic Axes Mundi, however, these connection points open up not into the mainland of the Godrealm, but onto a point far out in a celestial sea. Thus far, it has been too much for the Germans and the Aesir to assemble a force capable of crossing the channel, capturing a connection point in Britain and then establishing a foothold in the British Overworld. Instead, the Axis has attempted to cut off the British Gods by destroying their Axis Mundi connection points through bombing raids and rocket attacks. Still, the British have remained unwavering in their determination, and, with the arrival of the Yankee pantheon, the British Gods are again ready to go on the offensive.

BRITANNIA

AKA: LADY BRITAIN

Description: Britannia is one of the oldest nationalist gods, having been adopted by Athena nearly two thousand years ago when London was a Roman garrison town. Britannia is austere and domineering in her role as ruler of the British pantheon, but she inspires tremendous loyalty and respect in her subjects. As her nation grew from backwoods province to powerful monarchy and finally to preeminent colonial empire, Britannia has evinced a remarkable readiness for change. Although she still believes in a properly maintained social hierarchy, she was one of the first to embrace common law for all

her subjects. She sees her younger sisters, Columbia and Marianne, as immature and irreverent, but she is more than ready to put aside her differences in the face of the Axis threat.

As the spirit of an island nation, Britannia has always been particularly invested in seafaring technology. For centuries she has pushed her people to maintain their unbeatable naval power. The seas have always been her first line of defense, but in this war they have also proven to be her greatest vulnerability. Njord's aquatic titanspawn and U-boats have been choking off the isles, mercilessly hunting all traffic to and from the realm. Britannia herself has gone into the waters to meet the threat, slowly driving the invaders back and smashing their sea-going weapons. She will not be satisfied until she once again commands the world's finest naval power.

Not all of Britannia's Scions are drawn to the sea, but all of them find their way into positions of power and privilege. During the conflict, they serve as captains, admirals, politicians and titled nobility. Virtually all have been given knighthood or higher titles, and most hold large estates and ancestral fortunes. Their authority and wealth never makes them weak or self serving; they never fail to fight for king and country. They inspire their troops with courage and unflagging bravery, though they insist on proper formalities being observed at all times between the lower ranks of soldiers and their own echelons of command.

Associated Powers: Epic Charisma, Epic Intelligence, Animal (Lion), Civitas, Guardian, Justice, Water

Abilities: Academics, Awareness, Command, Integrity, Politics, Presence

Rivals: Columbia, Rodina Mat, Rosie the Riveter

Enemies: Amatsukami, Freya, Frig, Loki

JOHN BULL

AKA: JOHNNY ENGLISH, LE ROSBIF

Description: While Britannia embodies the upper crust of all the United Kingdoms, John Bull is the salt-of-the-earth Englishman. He often wears a top hat and shortened trousers, and is never without a Union Jack somewhere on his wardrobe, often displayed prominently across his vest. He is particular about his tea, has a keen hand at darts and enjoys nothing more than a pint of ale at his local pub. When the situation demands it, he is also daring and loyal beyond measure, dauntlessly moving against any threat to the empire and ever ready to respond to hardship with a stiff upper lip. He makes an excellent and disciplined soldier, ready to travel around the world, yet all the while knowing that glorious old overcast England is where his heart will always remain. He's also an enterprising merchant, open to new experiences but self-assured that his nation's customs are unquestionably the best.

Like Uncle Sam, he serves as a recruiter during times of war, but he does so as a peer rather than as a

commanding father figure. In this war, he divides his time between tending the English people at home and fighting in the war abroad. For the common folk, he moves about the countryside and the big cities, raising morale and teaching his countrymen how to make do under strict rationing and constant threat of bombing. As a soldier, he serves as Britannia's master sergeant, never shirking or failing to carry out his orders. He has fought the Aesir and the Dodekatheon in their home realms and in his own, as well as throughout the World. He is an implacable foe and will never so much as allow a hint of distress cross his face until after the job is done.

John Bull's Scions are every bit as good-natured, stubborn and dedicated as their patron. They are the sailors who would rather drown than surrender, the soldiers who bravely lead the charge against the enemy cannon and the merchant marines who maneuver the pursuing U-boats into traps. They never give up, never back down and never overstate a difficulty. Though numerous Scions of John Bull perished before the Yankees joined the war, more fight on, and will do so to the last.

Associated Powers: Epic Stamina, Animal (Bulldog), Civitas, Psychopomp, War

Abilities: Athletics, Brawl, Control, Craft, Integrity, Survival

Rivals: The Citizen, d'Artagnan, John Henry

Enemies: Freyr, Hachiman, Heimdall, Loki

ROBIN HOOD

AKA: ROBIN OF LOXLEY, ROBERT HOAD, THE BANDIT KING

Description: Dashing, mysterious and clever, Robin Hood is a cunning trickster and a daring fighter. He sometimes prefers the green garb of a merry medieval woodsman, and is known for his consummate skill in archery and disguise. He is most famed for turning citizens against unjust rulers and has a knack for making public relations his greatest weapon in guerilla warfare. In the best of times, he serves as Britannia's "loyal opposition," taking responsibility for nettling her about potential flaws in her policies and the moral implications of her actions. He is unshakably loyal to Britannia, though it is not unusual for him to criticize her, and once he even went so far as to inspire an attempt to dynamite the Houses of Parliament. Yet however far he takes his speech and his actions, Britannia seems to love him all the more.

Robin Hood's talents are invaluable in this war. He is a master of ambush and distraction, and the Axis has been forced to dedicate a disproportionate number of resources to contain him—to little effect. The Aesir have laid several traps for him, which Robin Hood evaded so deftly he embarrassed his would-be hunters. Robin Hood's greatest thrills are his daring escapes, and he much prefers to baffle an opponent than to beat him outright.

Robin Hood's Scions are clever, independent and charming. They make excellent spies and SAS commandos, and are well suited to operations deep behind enemy lines, where they can establish systems of sabotage, organize underground resistances and foment rebellions. They have an amazing talent for retrieving sensitive information, particularly through seduction of high ranking officials or of their wives and girlfriends. Whether on the battlefield or within civilization, Robin Hood's Scions pride themselves on having just the right solution to escape a seemingly certain death.

Associated Powers: Epic Dexterity, Epic Appearance, Epic Charisma, Epic Wits, Chaos, Civitas, Darkness

Abilities: Athletics, Larceny, Marksmanship, Melee, Presence, Stealth

Rivals: The Citizen, d'Artagnan, Pecos Bill

Enemies: Loki, Marishiten, Tyr

THE FRENCH PANTHEON

Proud, artistic and temperamental, the French pantheon was utterly unprepared for the swiftness of the Aesir assault. In mere weeks, their forces were shredded by the Axis invaders and the Gods themselves were subjugated and bound within their own realm. Worse, many of their own underlings betrayed them or later went to work for the enemy as spies, enforcers and soldiers. However, the occupying forces have found it difficult to quash the rebellious and obstinate French spirit. While the Gods of this pantheon are unable to offer any organized military resistance, they have wormed their way into the Axis system, institutionalizing sabotage, subversion and underground railroads to help escaping prisoners of war return to the fighting.

The Axis Mundi connection points of the French pantheon include the Eiffel Tower, the Arc de Triomphe and the Constitution of the Third Republic. Many of their connection points center in locations of culture, sophistication and artwork, including the Louvre itself as well as many of its works of art. Some Gods of the French pantheon were coerced into surrender to protect these priceless artifacts from being targeted for destruction. To make matters worse, several valuable historical artifacts and Axis Mundi connections, including the shield of Jeanne d'Arc and the True Crown of Emperor Napoleon I, are highly portable and therefore ideal targets for the Aesir and their mortal minions. The French Resistance has been struggling to keep these artifacts away from the

Nazis, but their enemies are drawing nearer all the time. If the Aesir should claim any of these artifacts, they would have access to the French Godrealm from any location, and could mount a full-scale blitzkrieg directly from Asgard, making any attempt to win back French territory a near impossibility.

D'ARTAGNAN

AKA: CHARLES DE BATZ-CASTELMORE, THE MUSKETEER

Description: Handsome, daring and hotheaded, d'Artagnan makes it a point of pride to wear the burgundy, white and black which came with his commission from King Louis XIV. He was a Scion (although which God sired him has never been determined), and has been to war numerous times to defend France as a hero, demigod and God. He has also guarded his nation against internal corruption, more than once arresting high officials who abused their authority. D'Artagnan's courage and aggression in battle inspires his men, and the soldiers he leads know that his quick thinking will get them out of tight situations. He is adept at war and has followed for centuries the latest trends in weapon development, though he always prefers to use his lightning-quick rapier whenever the situation allows.

D'Artagnan led the defense against the Axis invaders, but he simply did not have the troops or the resources to counter the superior weapons and tactics of his enemies. While he dueled with Heimdall, the rest of the enemy vanguard swept past him to invade the Godrealm. Since the fall of France, he has been unable to return to his Overworld home, but instead carries the fight throughout the World. He has been a guest in Britannia's court and has accompanied her soldiers into battle. He has also traveled far and wide, collecting the rag-tag scraps of his fellow nation-spirits, uniting them into a small but highly motivated force to strike against the Axis. D'Artagnan has engaged Ares in North Africa and the Amatsukami in several French colonial holdings in the Pacific.

D'Artagnan's Scions share their father's enthusiasm for war along with his hot-headed aggression. Those who were not killed outright in the invasion remained unwilling to accept the surrender of their nation, and most fell back into friendly countries to later join the Free French Army under Charles de Gaulle. The Free French Forces and other French expatriates and colonial loyalists now wage war against the occupiers in France itself when the can, but most of their battles are carried out in France's colonies and former holdings elsewhere in the world. They must usually fight with outdated weapons and equipment that is borrowed, stolen or looted, but they go to battle with great passion and are united in their desire to win back their country.

Associated Powers: Epic Dexterity, Epic Wits, Civitas, Guardian, War

Abilities: Command, Control, Investigation, Marksmanship, Melee, Presence

Rivals: The Citizen, Robin Hood, Pecos Bill, Rosie the Riveter

Enemies: Tyr, Heimdall, Marishiten

MADAME GUILLOTINE

AKA: LA TERREUR

Description: Madame Guillotine emerged as a powerful figure during the French Revolution, vindictively carrying out social upheaval that would usher in the new Republic. She is vicious and merciless, interprets the law rigidly and makes no exceptions in dealing out the harshest of punishments. She has a particular thirst for taking down the high and the mighty, and is constantly on the prowl for any misuse of power among the social elites or government officials of France.

The Axis War has sent her into hiding within her own country, where she punishes the citizens of the land and the spirits of the Overworld who betrayed the Republic. She hunts the servants of the Aesir wherever she can, but she is even more vengeful against those who have defected and now work for the enemy's occupying forces.

Madame Guillotine's Scions are divided into two camps: The first camp remains true to the spirit of the Republic of France and fights a shadow war against those who have betrayed it. In particular, they stalk the members of the Vichy government set up to serve as the Nazi's puppet rulers. They also remain vigilant for French informants who betray the underground resistance, and they mete out the most horrible punishments for such offenders. The other camp of Guillotine's Scions has rebelled against their mother and now work for the Vichy government as law enforcers. Their rationale is that the laws of the land must be upheld, and those laws have now been re-written by the occupying forces. These Scions hunt down and execute the saboteurs and the dissidents who disrupt the daily operations of the new, efficient government given to them by their conquerors. Scions of these two camps hunt those of the opposing camps whenever they can, waging a kind of war within the war, targeting each other's underlings and associates until one side can gain the upper hand and move in for the kill.

Associated Powers: Epic Perception, Civitas, Death, Justice, Mystery

Abilities: Awareness, Empathy, Integrity, Investigation, Politics, Science

Rivals: Baba Yaga, Betsy Ross, Johnny Appleseed

Enemies: Hel, Izanami, Loki

MARIANNE

AKA: MADAME RPUBLIQUE

Description: Like Madame Guillotine, Marianne came of age during the French Revolution, though while La Terreur embodies the hatred and vindication of the commoners, Marianne represents the hope and camaraderie shared by all the people. From the revolution, she led her countrymen into a new era of reason, liberty and equality. Although she is the youngest of the daughters Athena gave to the nations which now form the alliance, she is every bit as wise and reasonable as her sisters Columbia and Britannia. While her elder sister, Britannia, represents the ruling elite of her nation, Marianne identifies with the commoners, preferring to strictly adhere to the principal of "government by the people, for the people." She is also not as adventurous as her sister Columbia, preferring to stay at home to quietly appreciate her people and culture. She is especially taken with art, theater, fashion, good food and fine conversation. At times, she can be more aggressively rebellious than Columbia, which was probably at the heart of her many past squabbles with Britannia. During times of adversity, she is known to become violently passionate, and she reacts harshly to tyrants and threats to the civil peace.

Marianne hardly had time to catch her breath before being imprisoned by the Aesir. Her once-mighty realm's defenses were so quickly overwhelmed by the enemy's lightning war that she had no choice but to issue a decree of surrender and watch helplessly as her lands and her treasures were taken. She is now a prisoner in her own home, stripped of her Birthrights and barred from her powers, constantly guarded by the servants of the Axis. Still, though she spoke the words of surrender with her mouth, she never felt them in her heart, and she now issues orders to agents through secret messages, often cleverly disguised or encoded in other materials. Although the terms of her armistice forced her and all her fellows to turn over their weapons of war, they still resist their occupiers in whatever other ways they can, and Marianne has been masterminding a network of disinformation and sabotage.

Marianne's Scions do not savor war, but neither do they lack courage. Their nation's defenses, staggered by the First World War and then weakened further by economic depression, crumbled so quickly that few of them even had the opportunity to organize for battle. All the same, Marianne's children have organized themselves adeptly since the occupation, moving within the population to inspire the people to resist the invaders. They do anything and everything they can, which means overt violence when they think they can get away with it, but more often they must resort to delaying the Germans at critical times, acting in espionage networks and transporting wanted men to the coast to rendezvous with stealthy British ships. This is a dangerous undertaking, as the Nazis are ruthless in their crackdowns against underground resistance. A member of the French underground can run just as much risk to his life as a G.I. on the front lines.

Associated Powers: Epic Perception, Epic Charisma, Animal (Rooster), Civitas, Guardian, Justice

Abilities: Art, Awareness, Command, Empathy, Integrity, Presence

Rivals: Britannia, Uncle Sam, Rodina Mat

Enemies: Loki, Tsuki-Yomi, Tyr

The Soviet Pantheon

The Gods of Russia, like their mortal counterparts, are long accustomed to suffering, and both the traditional Slavic Gods and the current Soviet Gods that have come to replace them have always displayed noticeable stoicism. Theirs is now a country and an Overworld in transition, with the old guard being replaced or re-educated by the revolutionary new communist idealists. This new regime has attracted much animosity and mistrust from around the world, generating at least as much enmity in the Nazi party as in most other nations. Nevertheless, it came as a complete surprise when the Aesir launched the largest offensive of their war against the Soviet pantheon, combining their strike with the massive German invasion. Despite having signed a treaty of non-aggression less than a year prior, Rodina Mat fully expected Loki to break his word. She simply had not expected him to do it before the Aesir had finished off the British, or with such overwhelming force.

The Soviet pantheon is somewhat protected by the fact that their cultural upheaval and movement to communism led to the destruction of many of their traditional nationalistic sites. Now, their Axis Mundi connection points are limited to a few houses of government, such as the Kremlin, and significant communist artifacts, such as the tomb of Lenin. What is more, most of these connection points open up to a wind-swept tundra within the Soviet Godrealm, making invasion very difficult and costly, even without the stubborn resistance of its inhabitants. Russia and its Overworld has become a quagmire from which the Axis is unable to extract itself, making it even more difficult for them to fully respond to the Yankee advances on the other front. Some see the Aesir's fate as sealed, with it coming down to the Soviet and Yankee forces racing each other to Asgard. Such an assessment, however, is hopelessly oversimplified and foolishly optimistic. The fight is not assured for anyone on any front, and it may play out as a test of who is willing to make the greatest sacrifices.

Baba Yaga

AKA: Baba Jaga, Baba Roga

Description: Baba Yaga is widely known throughout the Slavic regions as a witch with strange and dangerous powers. When most of the original Slavic Gods disappeared or made way for the new Soviet powers, she remained to preserve the old ways of Russia. She possesses deep knowledge in many topics and may sometimes be prevailed upon for a magical service, but asking for help is a dangerous and harrowing experience. She amuses herself by using her Animal, Chaos and Health Purviews to warp living creatures into twisted creations. Her house walks about on giant chicken legs, the keyhole in her door is a living mouth with sharp teeth and her fence is lined with the severed heads of her victims—stripped of their flesh but kept alive and in her service through her dark magic. Despite her flair for the macabre, Baba Yaga is always true to her word and adheres to an Old World sense of morality. This code of conduct may not justify her actions in the minds of outsiders, but it can go a long way to making her more predictable to those who must work with her.

Baba Yaga expects proper etiquette from all her guests, and has been known to kill for the slightest transgression. Though she is a very old and powerful spirit who could contend with several of the Aesir in open battle, she is even more effective at instilling fear in even the most stalwart warrior's hearts. The Aesir believed that they could overrun Russia and its connected Godrealm as quickly as they had the French, but Baba Yaga has slowed them down by arranging for the worst imaginable conditions to bolster her incessant psychological warfare. Her best tactic has been a massive weather effect which dropped the winter temperatures to historical lows throughout Russia, centered on the cities where the fighting has been the heaviest. The longer the battles of Kursk and Leningrad continued, the more biting the cold became. More than a few Aesir are now starting to wonder if this is a sign of Fimbulwinter, and are starting to believe in their hearts that Loki's master plan may be backfiring and bringing about exactly what they meant to avoid. All thanks to Baba Yaga.

Baba Yaga's Scions generally are not found in the regular army. They are usually too old, too young or too deformed to work well as infantry. This has not stopped a few of them from going to war anyway, using hit-and-run tactics to inflict as much misery on the enemy as possible. Frequently, they find other ways to contribute as well—ways that lead to terrifying stories spread through word of mouth in the German armies. They are the old women who poison the water supplies, the doctors who administer arsenic instead of penicillin and the young girls who slit the throats of sleeping soldiers. The Scions of Baba Yaga are vicious, cunning, merciless and, above all, terrifying to the enemy, seeking not only to erode their will and drive them away, but to punish them in ways that will chill the blood of all their countrymen.

Associated Powers: Epic Appearance, Epic Intelligence, Animal (chicken), Civitas, Chaos, Health, Magic, Sky

Abilities: Animal Ken, Awareness, Craft, Medicine, Occult, Stealth

Rivals: Betsy Ross, Madame Guillotine, Marianne, Paul Bunyan, Rosie the Riveter

Enemies: Frig, Izanami, Vidar

THE CITIZEN

AKA: COMRADE, THE LABORER, THE PROLETARIAT

Description: Most Gods are strong egoists, the products of their own desire for distinguishing themselves from all other creatures in the cosmos. This is not the case for The Citizen, who achieved apotheosis not through his individuality, but through his lack of it. He has dedicated himself utterly to the communist state, which in turn he believes is dedicated to the people. The Citizen can appear in a hundred places throughout the Soviet Union to promote loyalty to the Communist Party, but to mortal comrades his face is always hidden in the shadows below his hat, behind the wheat in the field or in the swirling steam of the factory. Even the Gods have a difficult time remembering what he looks like. Although he had to learn secrecy to defend the movement from czarist persecution and later from foreign oppressors, he does not hide from his comrades so much as simply blend in with them so thoroughly that his personal identity becomes irrelevant in the context of Marx's and Lenin's vision. Rodina Mat suspects that he may not be a single God, but rather a collection of identically minded, faceless workers. If this is true, they have melded so thoroughly that even they cannot distinguish themselves.

The Citizen sees himself as an educator, and worked from the start to build the Department for Agitation and Propaganda. Through pamphlets, posters and even the performances of traveling actors, The Citizen has filled the hearts and minds of his people with important information about the ideals of communism, the injustices of certain foreign nations and threats to the state. In response to the Axis invasion, he has been constantly on the move, pulling in volunteers, organizing armies and encouraging each man, woman, child and celestial entity to do their all to defend their way of life.

The Scions of The Citizen are utterly dedicated to the greater prosperity of their motherland, which makes them dangerous foes. They are unemotional, untiring, self-sacrificing and unquestioning of orders. They prove over and again that they place the greater good before their personal wants and needs, and that they can beat the superior weapons of the Nazi invaders with teamwork, determination and dirty tricks. When they move into the frozen battlegrounds of Kursk and Leningrad, they do so with the single purpose of clogging the Nazi war machine with their own blood and bones.

Associated Powers: Epic Stamina, Darkness, Guardian, Psychopomp

Abilities: Athletics, Control, Craft, Fortitude, Integrity, Survival

Rivals: Pecos Bill, John Henry, Robin Hood, John Bull

Enemies: Baldur, Freyr, Loki, Susano-o

RODINA MAT

AKA: MOTHER MOTHERLAND, MOTHER RUSSIA

Description: The Russian people know what it is to suffer. They have endured mass famine, freezing winters, czarist tyranny and bloody revolutions. Through it all, they remain proud and strong because Rodina Mat offers them hope and continuity in an otherwise bleak world. Other nation spirits such as Britannia and Marianne think that Rodina Mat is backwards in her views. For her part, Rodina Mat believes that the upheaval and the disposing of her predecessors has made room for a glorious future in which her realm will not only break out of its ancient poverty but also lead the entire world to a new, more enlightened form of government and society.

Rodina Mat watched the Axis aggression with growing concern, but was still overwhelmed when the attack came for her. She was forced to leave many of her people without support as they fought for their very lives. Even with nothing, they resisted, and now she has returned to make them even stronger. Her taciturn alliance with the British and the Yankees is strained by the fact that she sees the other allies as not moving aggressively enough against their enemies. Sometimes she suspects that they are deliberately stalling in order to force her to make the greater sacrifices. For this, she will always resent them.

Rodina Mat's Scions are strong, tough, grimly determined and ready to give anything just to grind the speed of the Nazi's "lightning war" down to an agonized crawl. Often, they can seem condescending to outsiders, but considering the hardships they have endured it is difficult to argue that they have no right. Short of death or the loss of at least three limbs, Rodina Mat's children fight on in defense of their country, and they are unsatisfied unless they are out in the front lines. More than a few have been taken prisoner, however, and these are transported to camps as far away as France, where they spend their days in frustration searching for a means of escape so that they can go back to killing Nazis.

Associated Powers: Epic Strength, Epic Stamina, Animal (Bear), Fertility, Justice, War

Abilities: Athletics, Command, Control, Fortitude, Integrity, Survival

Rivals: Britannia, Columbia, d'Artagnan, John Bull, Uncle Sam

Enemies: Freya, Heimdall, Loki, Raiden

PANTHEON PURVIEW: CIVITAS

Nationalism demands a readiness to put the good of the people ahead of the good of the individual. This mentality is essential in times of war, where individuals must be prepared to lose everything in the name of the cause. Through the use of the Civitas purview, Scions can greatly enhance the functioning of their group, enabling

them to achieve what they never could as individuals. Such coordination of effort and ability must often be built on tenuous trust, especially because the Gods of the Allied Pantheons never expected to team with one another and often find that they have more dividing them than uniting them. The Allied Pantheons never sought to create this Purview; rather, it developed out of pure need. They simply had to learn to work together or be destroyed.

Many powers of the Civitas Purview allow a character to grant another character one or more dots of an Attribute, Ability or other trait. When this occurs, the user of the Boon temporarily loses the dots and may not cancel the Boon prematurely or regain the gift by any means, even if the recipient leaves the area of effect or is killed prior to the expiration of the power. Unless the Boon states otherwise, a recipient may not receive dots from more than one character in any given trait, but may receive dots from different characters for different traits. A recipient may be a mortal, a Scion, a God or even a titanspawn, but not an animal or an object. At the expiration of the Boon's power, all dots transferred in this way return automatically to the giver.

DISTRACTION MANEUVER (CIVITAS ▪)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 2 Legend

A Scion may use this Boon in conjunction with the Coordinated Assault action (**Scion: Hero**, p. 190) to apply the penalty to a greater number of targets. By organizing troops to make a feint against the line or simply by blowing something up to distract the enemy, the DV penalty imposed by the coordinated assault led by this Scion applies to a number of enemies equal to one-half the number of characters included in the coordinated assault. The leader of this attack cannot pick and choose which enemies will be affected by the distraction. If the number of enemies on the field exceeds the number which may be affected, those closest to the assault leader are the ones who suffer the distraction penalty. This Boon may only be used once per battle.

POOL AMMO (CIVITAS ▪▪)

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Command

Cost: 2 Legend

At its lowest point, the Soviet army had to distribute a single rifle and five bullets to every two soldiers. In times of great need, teammates must work together to distribute ammunition very effectively so that the soldier in position to fire can do so. This Boon allows a squad to instantly share ammo, with each bullet fired drawn from the gun with the most remaining ammunition, regardless of which weapon actually fired the shot. Essentially, no weapon will run out of bullets until they all do. All of the ammo to be pooled must be of the same general type (when in doubt, assume that different firearms use different types of ammunition). For each success scored on the roll, one person may join the pool. The members of the pool may switch weapons and still retain the effect, provided that the new weapons use the designated type of ammunition. The effects of this Boon last for one scene.

GIFT OF VIRTUE (CIVITAS ▪▪▪)

Dice Pool: Charisma + Empathy

Cost: 1 Legend per Virtue dot given

By laying a hand on a peer, the Scion may use this Boon to temporarily inspire the recipient and re-enforce his shared beliefs. The Scion may grant a number of dots of Virtue up to the number of successes rolled, but must pay Legend for each dot transferred in this way. The recipient may stack the new dots with any he already has in that Virtue, but need not have any dots in that Virtue to receive the gift. While in possession of the gifted Virtue, the recipient may use all the advantages but also suffers from all the disadvantages. Thus, mortals who receive this gift may gain bonus dice when spending Willpower on certain actions but would also need to struggle against these Virtues if attempting an action which runs counter to any gifted Virtues. The Scion who uses this Boon must retain at least one dot in any given Virtue. When attempting to act counter to a Virtue, a Scion who has given away one or more dots through the use of this Boon must still roll the full number of dice as if in possession of all his Virtue. The Gift of Virtue lasts for one scene. This Boon does not work on an unwilling recipient.

GIFT OF HEALTH (CIVITAS ▪▪▪▪)

Dice Pool: Charisma + Medicine

Cost: 1 Legend per health level box given

With this Boon, the Scion may transfer vitality from himself to a peer. The Scion may transfer a number of health level boxes up to the number of successes rolled, granting the recipient that many -0 health levels. For each health level thus transferred, the user of this Boon looses one health level box (starting with his -0 health levels), which may reduce the Scion to a state where he suffers wound penalties even when at maximum health. If the giver is wounded when he uses this power, his wounds remain with him, shifting into his remaining health level boxes. A recipient's wounds, if any, are shifted to begin in the new health boxes, and may then be healed normally through Medicine and other means.

The effects of this Boon last for one scene, at which point the health levels immediately fade from the recipient and return to the giver. Any wounds recorded in these transferred boxes are also moved from the recipient to the giver, and they remain of the same damage type. Therefore, if the recipient chugged some Titan venom and suffered Aggravated damage, then the giver may be in for a rude surprise.

GIFT OF ABILITY (CIVITAS ▪▪▪▪▪)

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Presence

Cost: 1 Legend per Ability dot given

Having the right people with the right skills at the right time can be critical for success in any operation. For each

success scored, the Scion may transfer up to one dot of Abilities to one recipient. The Scion may transfer as many dots from as many Abilities as he can afford, but none of the recipient's Abilities may be raised beyond five by these means. The effects of this transfer last one scene.

GIFT OF ATTRIBUTE (CIVITAS ▪▪▪▪▪ ▪)

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Integrity

Cost: 2 Legend per Attribute dot (+1 Willpower for Epic Attributes)

This Boon allows the Scion to transfer dots in Attributes or Willpower to a single person. The Scion may transfer any number of dots up to the number of successes scored on the roll, but may not reduce her own dots in any given attribute lower than one. The recipient is limited to the normal maximum attribute range based on his Legend score (so a normal mortal could not have his Strength raised above five, for example). The Scion may also gift an Epic Attribute, but each attribute transferred in this way costs the giver 1 Willpower in addition to the standard Legend cost for every point transferred. The effects of this Boon last for one scene.

GIFT OF DEFENSE (CIVITAS ▪▪▪▪▪ ▪▪)

Dice Pool: Stamina + Fortitude

Cost: 2 Legend per DV

The Scion may share defense with another, sacrificing his own safety to protect his peer. The Scion may take a penalty to his Defense Values up to the number of successes rolled and grant a bonus of the same amount to one recipient. The recipient's bonus from this Boon may not exceed his original Defense Value, but the DV may be further modified by other factors such as actions or attacks. The user of this Boon must remain within two hundred feet of the recipient. If the two are separated by a greater distance, the recipient loses the bonus even though the recipient maintains the penalty. If the distance is closed again, the recipient regains the DV bonus. The effects of this Boon last for one scene.

POOL LIFE (CIVITAS ▪▪▪▪▪ ▪▪▪)

Dice Pool: Perception + Medicine

Cost: 2 Legend per person included

Much like the Pool Ammo power allows a squad to extend their ammunition to the uttermost limit, this Boon allows a squad to distribute their injuries in the most advantageous way, guarding each individual through the life force of the others. Any injury received by any member of the squad will be suffered by the member of the squad with the most available health levels. Each success on the roll allows the Scion to include one person in the pool. When a character in this pool is targeted by an attack, use the Defense Value and Soak value of the character being targeted, but transfer any wounds to the character with the greatest number of unmarked health level boxes. This Boon makes no distinction for types of damage, so a character with two Aggravated wounds will receive the injury before a character with three Bashing wounds. The effects of this power remain in effect for one scene, so long as no member of the pool is more than fifty feet away from any other member. A character who strays too far will not be considered part of the pool while he is out of range, but re-enters the pool as soon as he comes back within fifty feet of his nearest member.

ONE FOR ALL (CIVITAS ▪▪▪▪▪ ▪▪▪▪)

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Presence

Cost: 20 Legend + 1 Willpower

The God using this power can completely give himself over to the needs of his peers, distributing any or all of his knowledge and aptitudes to any number of people of his choosing. For each success, the user of this Boon may transfer up to two dots of Abilities, Attributes, Epic Attributes, health levels, Willpower or Virtues to any character or characters of his choosing. Successes may also be used to transfer Boons or Knacks on a one-for-one basis. The recipients may not have any score raised above their normal maximum based on their Legend score and other applicable factors. The giver may reduce any of his own scores to zero, but if Willpower, health levels or any Attribute or Virtue is reduced to zero then the God will fall into a deep slumber from which he cannot be awakened for the duration of this Boon. This Boon lasts one scene, and the recipients must be aware of and willing to receive the gift.

ALL FOR ONE (CIVITAS ▪▪▪▪▪ ▪▪▪▪▪)

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Command

Cost: 25 Legend + 1 Willpower

While this power is in use, the God sets up a subconscious psychic network that links the nervous systems of each member of a squad. This provides many benefits. First, all the members of the squad enjoy telepathic communication, which is both instant and silent. Second, any member of the squad may use the highest base Dodge or Parry DV possessed by any member of the squad, modified by the character's own attacks and other bonuses or penalties. Third, any member of the squad may use the highest level of any Ability possessed by any member of the squad in place of his own. Fourth, any member may spend Willpower on behalf of any other. Finally, any member of the squad who has at least one dot in an Epic Attribute (including one transferred to him through Gift of Attribute or One for All) may use any squad member's Knack associated with that attribute, even if the character using it would not normally meet the requirements to do so.

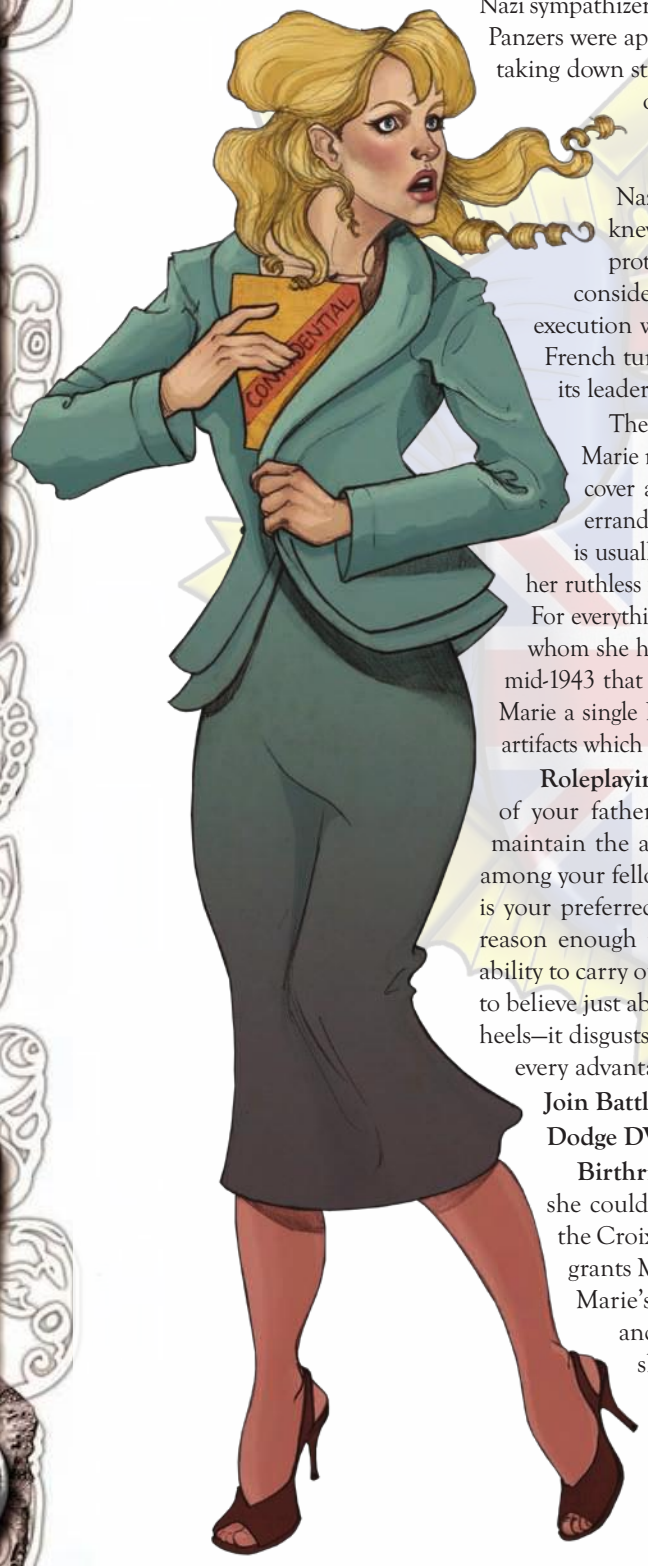
For each success rolled, the God using this Boon may include one person in the squad. All members of the squad must remain within fifty feet of at least one other member. This power lasts one scene, and all members must be willing and knowing participants when the power is activated.

SCIONS OF THE ALLIED PANTHEONS

The Allied pantheons are united in their desperation, and they are long past the point of being choosey about which Scions receive Visitations. All too often this means their children lack the proper equipment, qualifications or loyalty, which can lead to even more dissention in their ranks down the line. But finding a good Scion and putting him or her in the right place at the right time can turn the tide of battle. The following are two sample Scions of the Allied pantheons. The Scion of Marianne is a beginning hero-level character, and the Scion of The Citizen is a demigod-level Scion.

MARIE DU CHAMPS

SCION OF MARIANNE



Marie is jaded, cunning and cautious in a way that belies her seeming youthful inexperience. Her father was an outspoken grassroots leader against the Nazi sympathizers in the French government. When word came through that the Panzers were approaching Paris, he was one of the first citizens out in the road, taking down street signs to delay the enemy as much as possible. As the weeks of the occupation led into months and Hitler set up the Vichy puppet government, Marie's father pulled together a network of citizens in Paris and throughout the countryside to resist the Nazis in any way they could. It was dangerous work, and they all knew it. Captured Americans and British military personnel were protected under the Geneva Conventions, but French citizens were considered subjects of Germany and their actions were punishable by execution without trial. This was to be the fate of Marie's father, when a French turncoat infiltrated the organization and submitted the names of its leaders to the Gestapo.

The Nazis assumed that the organization died with her father, but Marie re-organized and even expanded the operation. She had the perfect cover as a prim and proper young lady volunteering her time running errands for war widows. A wink and an absent-minded tossing of her hair is usually enough for her to allay the suspicions of most investigators, and her ruthless weeding-out of spies and traitors keeps the rest of her people safe. For everything else, she uses the .45 given to her by a downed American pilot whom she helped escape back to England some months back. It was not until mid-1943 that Marianne was able to get a messenger through to Marie, offering Marie a single Birthright and the plea that she protect certain key locations and artifacts which the Axis powers could use against her nation's pantheon.

Roleplaying Hints: Since the invasion of your country and the murder of your father, you have become cynical and pessimistic. In public, you maintain the appearance of being a sweet and pious young lady, but when among your fellow conspirators you do not hide your jaded outlook. Smoking is your preferred means of dealing with stress, and the cigarette rationing is reason enough to eject the Germans. Your real weapon in the war is your ability to carry out subterfuge and sabotage. You find that you can get the Nazis to believe just about anything you say, especially if you wear a slit skirt and high heels—it disgusts you to do so, but the stakes are too high to refrain from using every advantage.

Join Battle: 6

Dodge DV: 4

Birthrights: Marianne was never able to meet Marie in person, and she could smuggle out only one Birthright for her: a necklace bearing the Croix de Lorraine, the symbol of the Free French Movement, which grants Marie the ability to channel the Guardian and Justice Purviews. Marie's followers consist of a network of 30 French citizens in Paris and throughout the countryside. Although they have no special skills, they all resent the Nazi occupation and will do what they can to help the resistance movement.

SCION
HERO

Name	Calling	Pantheon
Marie Du Champs	French Resistance Operative	Allied (French)
Player	**Nature**	**God**
	Cynic	Marianne

MARIE DU CHAMPS

ATTRIBUTES

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●○○○○○○○○	Charisma	●●●○○○○○○○	Perception	●●●○○○○○○○
Dexterity	●●●○○○○○○○	Manipulation	●●●●○○○○○○	Intelligence	●●○○○○○○○○
Stamina	●●○○○○○○○○	Appearance	●●●●○○○○○○	Wits	●●●○○○○○○○

ABILITIES

□ Academics	●●○○○	□ Craft	○○○○○	□ Melee	○○○○○
□ Animal Ken	○○○○○	□	○○○○○	□ Occult	●○○○○
■ Art	○○○○○	□	○○○○○	□ Politics	●●○○○
□	○○○○○	■ Empathy	●●●●○	■ Presence	●●●●○
□ Athletics	○○○○○	□ Fortitude	○○○○○	□ Science	○○○○○
■ Awareness	●●●○○	■ Integrity	●●●●○	□	○○○○○
□ Brawl	○○○○○	□ Investigation	●●●○○	□	○○○○○
■ Command	●●○○○	□ Larceny	●●●●○	□ Stealth	●●●●○
□ Control	○○○○○	□ Marksmanship	●●○○○	□ Survival	○○○○○
□	○○○○○	□ Medicine	○○○○○	□ Thrown	○○○○○

BIRTHRIGHTS

Relic (Croix de Lorraine – Guardian, Justice) 2,

Followers (French Underground) 3

WEAPONS

Clinch: Acc 3, Dmg 2B, Parry DV -, Spd 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Acc 2, Dmg 5B, Parry DV 0, Spd 5

Unarmed, Light: Acc4, Dmg 2B, Parry DV 3, Spd 4

Colt .45: Acc 7, Dmg 5L, Rng 20, Clip 8, Spd 5, P

KNACKS

Benefit of the Doubt, Takes One to Know One, Stench of Guilt, Serpent's Gaze, Perfect Memory

WILLPOWER

●●●●●●●○○○

□□□□□□□□□□

VIRTUES

Conviction	●●●●●
Duty	●●○○○
Endurance	●○○○○
Valor	●○○○○

SOAK

A____ L_1_ B_2_

LEGEND

●●●○○○
○○○○○○

Legend Points 9 | ____

BOONS

Judgment

Pool Ammo

Vigil Brand

ARMOR

_____

A____ L____ B____

HEALTH

-0	-1	-1	-2	-2	-4	I
□	□	□	□	□	□	□

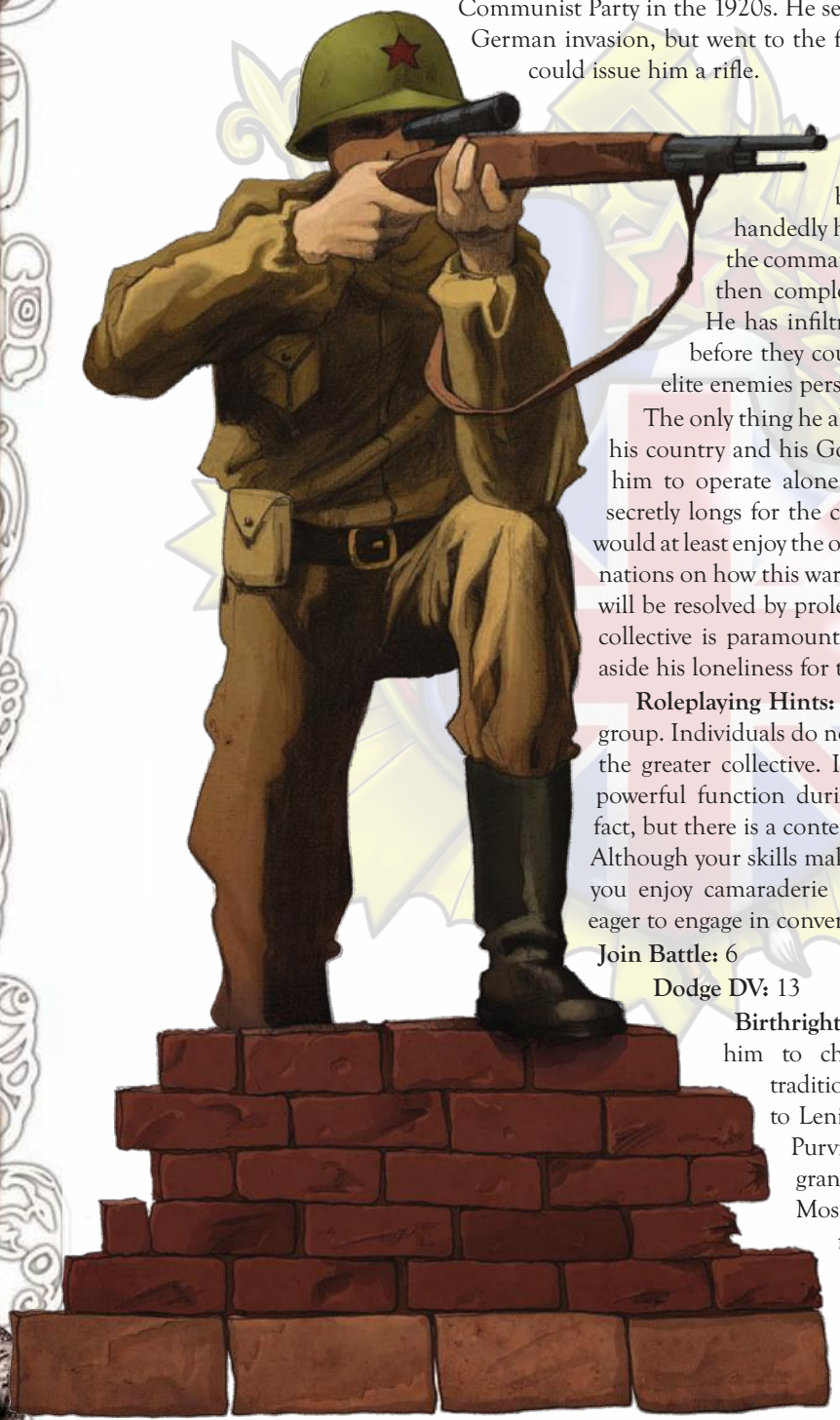
EXPERIENCE

_____

MARIE DU CHAMPS

SNIPER #113
SCION OF THE CITIZEN

If Sniper #113 ever had a name, it is entirely possible that even he has forgotten it. This much is known: he was born during the First World War and worked as a youth to promote the "Lenin Levy" recruitment drive for the Communist Party in the 1920s. He served as an industrial laborer prior to the German invasion, but went to the front lines as soon as the Soviet military could issue him a rifle.



In person, Sniper #113 is quiet, unassuming and utterly unmemorable. In battle, he is terrifyingly deadly and bewilderingly elusive. He has single-handedly held up entire Aesir divisions by targeting the commanding officers with pinpoint accuracy and then completely fading away into the background. He has infiltrated Helheim to assassinate titanspawn before they could be mobilized, and escaped dozens of elite enemies personally hunting him.

The only thing he allows to occupy his mind is the defense of his country and his Godrealm. Although his function requires him to operate alone, he is by nature a social creature and secretly longs for the companionship of peers. Failing that, he would at least enjoy the opportunity to educate soldiers from other nations on how this war was caused by capitalistic aggression and will be resolved by proletariat unity. However, dedication to the collective is paramount, and Sniper #113 is quite ready to put aside his loneliness for the sake of the greater struggle.

Roleplaying Hints: For you, the highest good is that of the group. Individuals do not matter except in how they can support the greater collective. It so happens that you can serve a very powerful function during war. You do not feel proud of this fact, but there is a contentment that comes with a job well done. Although your skills make you well suited for independent work, you enjoy camaraderie above all things and you are especially eager to engage in conversations on political philosophy.

Join Battle: 6

Dodge DV: 13

Birthrights: Sniper #113's Red Star Badge allows him to channel the Psychopomp Purview. His traditional *ushanka* fur hat, which once belonged to Lenin himself, grants access to the Darkness Purview. At the outbreak of war, the Citizen granted Sniper #113 a specially enhanced Mosin-Nagant M1891/30 sniper rifle. This rifle, dubbed the Red October, adds +100 range, +2 accuracy, and +1 L damage to a Garand rifle template (see p. 266).

SCION
DEMIGOD

Sniper #113 (Name)	Sniper (Calling)	Allied (Soviet) (Pantheon)
(Player)	Perfectionist (Nature)	The Citizen (God)

SNIPER #113

ATTRIBUTES

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●○○○○○○○○	Charisma	●●●○○○○○○○	Perception	●●●●○○○○○○
Dexterity	●●●●●●○○○○	Manipulation	●●●○○○○○○○	Intelligence	●●○○○○○○○○
Stamina	●●●●●●○○○○	Appearance	●●○○○○○○○○	Wits	●●○○○○○○○○

ABILITIES

☐ Academics	○○○○○	■ Craft (Agriculture)	●●○○○	☐ Melee	○○○○○
☐ Animal Ken	○○○○○	☐	○○○○○	☐ Occult	○○○○○
☐ Art	○○○○○	☐	○○○○○	☐ Politics	○○○○○
☐	○○○○○	☐ Empathy	○○○○○	☐ Presence	○○○○○
■ Athletics	●●●○○	■ Fortitude	●●●○○	☐ Science	○○○○○
☐ Awareness	●●●○○	■ Integrity	●●●○○	☐	○○○○○
☐ Brawl	○○○○○	☐ Investigation	●●●○○	☐	○○○○○
☐ Command	○○○○○	☐ Larceny	●●●○○	☐ Stealth	●●●●●
■ Control (Automobile)	●○○○○	☐ Marksmanship	●●●●●	■ Survival	●●●○○
☐	○○○○○	☐ Medicine	○○○○○	☐ Thrown	○○○○○

BIRTHRIGHTS

Guide (Party Leader) 3, Relic (Red October Rifle – +100 range, +2 accuracy, +1 L damage) 5, Relic (Red Star Badge – Psychopomp) 1, Relic (Lenin's Ushanka – Darkness) 1

WEAPONS

Clinch: Acc 6, Dmg 3B, Parry DV -, Spd 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Acc 5, Dmg 6B, Parry DV 10, Spd 5

Unarmed, Light: Acc 7, Dmg 3B, Parry DV 13, Spd 4

Red October Rifle: Acc 15, Dmg 9L, Rng 250, Clip 8, Spd 5, P

KNACKS

Cat's Grace, Divine Balance, Lightning Sprinter, Monkey Climber, Trick Shooter, Devourer, Inner Furnace, Predatory Focus

BOONS

Gift of Health, Night Eyes, Shadow Mask, Shadow Refuge, Shadow Step, Unbarred Entry, Unerring Orientation

WILLPOWER

●●●●●●●○○○

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

SOAK

A 2 L 5 B 8

ARMOR

A____ L____ B____

EXPERIENCE

VIRTUES

Conviction	●●●●○
Duty	●●●●●
Endurance	●●●●●
Valor	●○○○○

LEGEND

●●●●●●○○○○○○ 36 Legend Points

HEALTH

0	0	0	-2	-2	-4	I
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
■	■	■	■	■	■	
■	■	■	■	■	■	
■	■	■	■	■		
	■	■	■	■		
	■	■	■	■		

RUNNING A WORLD WAR TWO STORY CYCLE

World War Two has developed its own body of legends that are every bit as inspiring, intriguing and terrifying as the ancient epics. Combine these with the magical elements of mythology and you've got a recipe for excitement. Yet choosing World War Two as a setting for a **Scion** game comes with challenges as well as opportunities. The Storyteller will want to distinguish the war era from that of modern life, while at the same time helping players feel comfortable role-playing against a backdrop that may represent a significant departure from their norm. It's easier to do than it sounds, and this section can help.

The first rule to remember is this: never let facts get in the way of a good story. It is true that the more background knowledge you possess, the richer and deeper your storyline can become, so if you and players are history buffs, then go for the depth. But for most players it simply won't matter whether the 101st was in Dordogne in August of '44 or whether the MP-38 submachine gun was ever used by the Italian army. If no one at the table can call you on it, then it's fair game—and you'll probably never need to get that detailed in the first place. Alternatively, if you have that one guy in your group who's going to get huffy about historical accuracy, let him be the Storyteller for a while.

Story ideas can be easy to find if you know where to look. Just as in a conventional **Scion** game, you have all of mythology to draw on, and to this you can add a wealth of war stories. World War Two movies, television shows, text books and historical fiction abound, and any one of them can provide the ready outline for anything from a single scene to a full cycle. Furthermore, blending mythology and history opens even more possibilities than exploring either separately, because it allows you to re-interpret and redefine the assumed paradigms for each. After all, the way Sigurd killed the serpent (by hiding in a hole until its soft belly was right overhead) would work really well against a panzer tank, too. Likewise, Patton's bold foray across the Rhine might have been echoed by a Scion of Uncle Sam leading the first allied forces into Asgard. And don't forget the many modern nationalistic myths, such as George Washington crossing the Delaware (maybe the characters will have to sneak across a river, too) or John Henry racing the track-laying machine (perhaps his Scion will need to out-produce a robot created by the Imperial Japanese Engineer Corps).

Setting a story in World War Two can also broaden the potential for follow-up stories that take advantage of the fact that the characters are potentially ageless. It is possible for a character to achieve apotheosis during the span of only a few years of game time, but to players it might not feel like immortality because not much time has flowed by. Creating a heroic cycle that sees the Band through decades rather than months will create the mystique of travelling through the ages. If characters who get their start during World War Two average a few experience points per year of game time, then they are on track to be demigods when the Titans escape, and finally Gods in the present day setting.

SCIONS AT WAR

War offers many rare opportunities—at the very least, you get the chance to visit strange and exotic places, meet fascinating people and kill them. Beyond that, it offers a rare escape from the restraints of ordinary life. Absent are the judging eyes of family, neighbors, perspective employers and the police, and in this absence true character may be revealed. Some soldiers revel in this moral vacuum, while others fear it more than the enemy. To their great credit, most soldiers behave with honor and integrity even under the most trying conditions. For the Scion, these gaps in structured authority can be a welcomed relief. The children of Gods, often pawns in their parents' conflicts, are more accustomed to warfare than mortals. For most Scions, to live among mortals is to live a double life as they must forever keep these battles hidden from the innocents around them. But in a warzone, a Scion hardly needs to hide. Explosions, unexplained phenomenon and massive collateral damage might make front-page news if it happens on Main Street, but it could go completely unnoticed during battle. In terms of epic adversaries, under ordinary circumstances there isn't much point in Scions tangling with mortals. It makes for a one-sided battle at best, and the heroes will probably come off like bullies. But arm those mortals with automatic weapons and heavy ordnance and place them inside bunkers, tanks and battleships—now you've got a fight on your hands. It's a chance for the Scions to prove themselves by doing what no other soldiers on the battlefield can. Scions can prove their epic prowess by busting into bunkers, shooting down flights of enemy planes and single-handedly destroying a 50-ton tank. Mortals can actually make worthy adversaries in this setting, right up there with titanspawn and celestial minions.

There are some logical limits to mortal adversaries in war. Naturally, it is every player's desire to bash his way through platoon after platoon all the way to Berlin, and then bitch-slap Hitler until he cries for mommy. The last thing a Storyteller wants to hear from his players is "oops, I accidentally won the war too soon," so keep this in

mind: while the protagonists are out ravaging the enemy troops, what are the children of the Axis Gods doing? If the Scions aren't willing to play a little defense, then they will soon find their own homelands scorched and pulverized. So, striking the proper balance is important. Use mortals as minions and supporting cast, while the Scions' first priority is to counter supernatural threats against which their own mortal allies stand no chance. The Axis, in its mounting desperation, is perpetually seeking that one wonder-weapon that will win the war in a single knock-out blow; it is the Scions' roll to uncover these plots and put a stop to them.

SOCIAL MATTERS

Let's face it: a World War Two story is likely to be combat-heavy. This does not represent a problem for many players, but even the most rabid fight fan will eventually find an unending string of battles a little monotonous. Nor would this be an accurate representation of military life, and even a Scion would eventually crack if never allowed to pull back for a little human interaction. As a Storyteller, keep in mind that action scenes should be punctuated with other types of challenges. Even during war, there are many situations that require social responses. When a soldier needs special resources, he must work politically within the military hierarchy. When on furlough, he must interact with civilians (and we've all heard of Marines who can get into more trouble with locals on a two-day pass than with the enemy on a two-week offensive). In the field, a soldier might need to negotiate with soldiers in other divisions who may not share the same immediate goals, or he may encounter non-combatant civilians who need help... or who might be spies in disguise.

War can be liberating, but it can also place severe restrictions on certain relationships. This usually doesn't interfere much with the plot, but it can sometimes be a stretch for including Scions of different backgrounds into the same Band. One option is for the Storyteller to designate what kinds of characters the players have access to, perhaps declaring that all characters must be U.S. Marines and the Scions of Yankee Gods, for example. But most players will have more fun—and most Storytellers will have more material to work with—if the characters have various origins. The easy excuse for an eclectic mix of characters is simply to decree that the characters' various patrons assembled them for a particular purpose. This relieves the group of needing to go too far into character backgrounds, since their reasons and motivations are essentially pre-packaged. But it can also rob the Storyteller and the players of developing some of the richness of the story and the characters, which can be especially important in longer games where the plot will eventually need to develop organically from its own roots. If you have the time, it is always better to tie each character into the story through his unique background.

Female characters can be the most difficult to justify for inclusion in World War Two combat units, owing to the prevailing attitudes about gender in this era.

Nevertheless, women from France to the Philippines were forced to grab rifles and defend their homes. Russian women in particular rose to the call, and served in roles as diverse as tank operators, combat pilots, snipers and heavy gunners. In other armies, women held very critical positions as intelligence analysts, field nurses, supply officers and espionage agents. When travelling in and around a warzone, a female Scion might either need to occasionally prove her ability to handle herself or find a way to move inconspicuously. In the final analysis, even the strictest recreationists would need to acknowledge the possible participation of female characters, especially females with divine powers.

Another challenge for assembling Scions is the geographic range throughout which they may be spread. By 1942, all the major players had taken the field, but even allied armies rarely crossed each others' paths. This doesn't have to be the case for Scions, who are often able to travel farther and faster than their mortal counterparts. The presence of Yankee and British Scions are easy to justify on any front, since their corresponding armies were found in every theater, including Eastern Europe, where they ran several supply and support missions to the Soviets. French Scions inside France would most likely be civilian members of the underground resistance with little or no military training, but the Free French Forces and other loyalist units could be found throughout Europe and the Pacific. The Russians tended to be a little more isolated because they had their hands full in their homeland, but when taken prisoner they were transferred to camps far to the west, where they might sometimes escape to join other allied forces. If you want to open possibility of other pantheons, it would be logical that the Presedjet would become involved in the North African theater, the Loa Scions would have enlisted from Louisiana, and, by the end of 1943, Mexico and much of South America had joined the war, so the Atzlánti could have done the same. Of course, Scions of Axis Gods could rebel against their patrons, although they would face much distrust among their new allies.

THEATERS OF OPERATION

The characters and plot will likely influence your selection of setting, and vice versa. This war included a staggering number of theaters of operation, each with their own climate, characteristics and timeframe.

Britain: The Axis never set their boots on British soil, but the skies and seas around the island have seen heavy fighting. In the early years of the war, Germany pummeled England with repeated air raids. Although Hitler lacked the resources to send manned flights, he instead peppered London with the V1 and V2 rockets, the world's first cruise missiles. In the War of the Gods, the Axis captured few connections to the British Godrealm, but the fighting remained stiff.

Eastern Europe: The war between Russia and Germany turned ugly very quickly. The Geneva Conventions became a forgotten luxury as both sides routinely massacred POWs and victimized civilians. The winters brought deadly cold and shortages of food on both sides, while the big cities were choked with brutal house-to-house fighting. Stories

set on this front should be marked by limited access to weapons and supplies, vengeful enemies and freezing weather sometimes devastating enough to inflict 1B per hour, with a trauma rating of 3.

Homefront, USA: Just because the mortal German and Japanese forces never crossed the shores of the United States doesn't mean that the U.S.A. was free from the action. The Axis Gods hatched scheme after scheme to sow distrust and destruction among the American people. Scions acting as national protectors were charged with rooting out saboteurs, spies and sympathizers.

Italy/Southern Europe: This theater was a hotspot from 1943 on. Much of the fighting took place in the mountainous regions of northern Italy as allies tried to push their way through the "soft underbelly of Europe." The primary adversaries here were both the Aesir and the Dodekatheon, although some rebellious Scions of the Dodekatheon served as ready allies. By the end of 1943, the Italians surrendered, Olympus was besieged and the Nazis occupied the country to use as a buffer for their own homeland.

North Africa: This region saw the most intensive fighting in the beginning of the war. Although ostensibly neutral, the Presedjet occasionally got sucked into the war, often because of Set's unofficial alliance with the Aesir. Much of the fighting took place in the scorching desert, which means that mortal troops required vehicles to move at speed. Airpower was king within these open landscapes, and being able to maintain supplies of water and protect soldiers from the blistering heat was as decisive a factor as heavy ordnance.

The Pacific: Though primarily the battleground of the Yankees and the Amatsukami, more than a few French and British mortals and Scions also fought against the Imperial Japanese forces. In sharp contrast to the cold European plains or the flat African landscapes, the battlegrounds of the Pacific consist of verdant tropical islands. Immortals with access to the Sky and Sea purviews had a decided advantage in this theater, moving easily among the isolated and often uncharted islands. Combatants were sometimes marooned far out to sea, and more than a few sailors discovered strange secrets and bizarre creatures that were long-forgotten—or were never known—in the outside world.

Germany: In the beginning, the German people were loyal to Hitler and swelled with nationalistic pride, but as the war turned against them, public resentment grew and outsiders found a few willing accomplices to stand up to the totalitarian leaders of the Reich. In April of 1945, at the tail end of the war in Europe, the disintegrating German military fled west in hopes of surrendering to the Americans instead of being consumed by the vengeful, rampaging Soviet forces. At the same time, Nazi leaders attempted to gather their last scraps of power, either to make a final stand or to escape with their great wealth, untested weapons and horrible secrets.

The Overworld: All the work done by Scions in the World to capture Axis Mundi connection points only served as a stepping-stone to reach the war of the Gods. The fighting raged through the heavens in much the same way as it did in the World. The Scions may not have had much opportunity to mingle in mortal military efforts if they were "drafted" by their divine patrons to brave the exotic and sometimes highly illogical realms of the Gods. Unfortunately, the threat also increased as the battle moved into celestial spaces. Going from legendary battlefield hero among the mortals to low-status grunt in the Godrealms was quite a shock for many Scions.

The Underworld: Outright warfare is uncommon in the Underworld regions—there's not much point, since most everyone there is already dead. But during the War, the death-lands were primarily in the hands of the Axis Gods, which made them an ideal staging ground for all kinds of nasty surprises. Scions saw opportunity to infiltrate these areas by force, trickery or stealth in order to thwart the marshaling of spirits and titanspawn to rise to the World.

TYPES OF STORIES

World War Two can host almost any story that works in the modern setting, and a few that more easily fit this era. The ideas listed below can serve as springboards into many kinds of stories.

Front Lines Fighting: This is the most straightforward type of war story, with the heroes slugging it out against the enemy in the thick of battle. The Scions will most likely receive specific orders for obtaining objectives, which usually involve tackling strategically important points such as bridges, fortresses or "AMCons" (Axis Mundi Connection points). It could also mean holding out while surrounded by overwhelming Axis forces or pressing through to locate and rescue friendly (or enemy) V.I.P.s. Of course, what soldiers do between battles is as important to the story as what they do in the battles, so they can also expect dramatic encounters with squad mates, superior officers, needy locals, salacious sympathizers and more.

Enemy Territory: Special forces such as a Band of Scions may be called upon for important missions behind enemy lines. These groups might need to disrupt enemy supply chains, rescue important prisoners or prevent (or commit) the assassinations or kidnappings of key figures. This would still be a combat-heavy story, since the protagonists are expected to directly damage enemy military interests, but it could also require mission specialists with uncommon knowledge or skill sets, and probably the ability to fast-talk effectively.

Espionage: Go far enough behind the lines, and the story essentially becomes one of civilians again, albeit civilians caught in the tense and politically charged atmosphere of a totalitarian state at war. In an espionage story, the characters will not necessarily fight regularly or openly, but must instead use their wits to steal the secrets, disrupt the troops or plant the bombs. Characters might be underground resistance members in occupied territory or operatives planted in the Axis' capital cities or central Godrealms. Their danger may be even greater here than on the front lines, since they are perpetually surrounded by enemy.

POW: Many great stories see the protagonists incarcerated by the Axis. Sometimes they are treated with respect and sometimes with brutality, but the goal of the hero is to remain in the war, even from behind barbed wire fences. Some true-life stories involve Allied prisoners developing amazing devices and brilliant schemes to free themselves. Wherever Scions are imprisoned in the World, Overworld or Underworld, they must use their wits and ingenuity to bewilder their captors and turn their imprisonment to their own ends.

The Race: Usually, the goal of war is to wipe out the other side directly, but sometimes both sides share the same objective and the victor is the one who can achieve it first. For Scions, this can be something like an ancient and powerful artifact which has been unearthed in the deserts of Egypt or on an uncharted Pacific island. If it falls into the hands of the Axis, it could spell doom for the free world (and free Overworld). To prevent that eventuality, the Scions must brave traps, decipher riddles and outmaneuver or outfight rivals to lay claim to the objective before the Axis can use it to snuff out the Allied powers.

THE FIELDS RUN WITH ICHOR: RULES FOR MILITARY WARFARE

Fighting tends to run a little bit differently in war than in civilian life. Heavy weapons and large numbers of combatants change the tactics and flow of combat. This section provides the rules to meet the needs of a war-time setting.

In the maelstrom of world war, tens of thousands of soldiers clash on the battlefield. For the first time in history, coordinated attacks between infantry, artillery, tanks and aircraft are possible. While this makes for a dramatic and compelling backdrop upon which to tell a story, trying to run a combat with dozens or even hundreds of individual characters is impractical. As a result, **Scion** uses the following rules to abstract mass combat into a clash of units rather than individual characters. For reference throughout this section, units track time in *long ticks* lasting one minute each instead of the standard second-long tick increments of individual combat.

These mass combat rules aren't appropriate to every conflict, particularly if the battlefield only serves as a dramatic backdrop for a more personal combat. Use these mass combat rules whenever heroes and demigods become personally involved in open warfare or whenever the Storyteller wishes to leave a battle's outcome to strategy and chance as opposed to the story's particular needs. Furthermore, mass combat in **Scion** assumes that unit commanders charge into battle, leading their troops by example rather than directing the battle from the safety of the rear. Generals may use radios and runners to issue orders and direct an entire force from afar, but only a unit leader can personally rally his troops to victory with his own prowess.

UNITS

Units in mass combat fall into one of two categories: *solo units* and *complimentary units*. Solo units are characters that aren't part of any group. They use their individual stats and traits on the battlefield. Most units are complimentary units, made up of one character and everyone under his command. In game terms, a complimentary unit uses its commander's statistics with trait bonuses according to the numbers, equipment and training of his troops. The special traits that define complimentary units are:

COMBAT UNITS MAKE GREAT ACCESSORIES

Scion simplifies mass combat by treating units as enhancements to their commander. Troops provide a bonus to their leader, increasing his traits and granting him extra health levels. Moreover, trained soldiers marching in formation cannot be attacked as individuals, but force enemies to fight them as a collective group. Storytellers should not allow characters to fight individuals once units have formed ranks on the battlefield. If they want to cross swords with an enemy commander, they will have to fight their way through the rank and file soldiers first. Units in mass combat are rarely destroyed outright, though, unless they are the target of a truly devastating weapon. More commonly, units fall victim to exhaustion or suffer gradual losses until their morale breaks and they either surrender or abandon their leader on the battlefield, leaving him to his fate at the hands of his enemies.

Magnitude: The number of members in a unit.

Training: The discipline and training of a unit.

Endurance: The overall staying power of a unit.

Power: The combined mystical power of a unit, factoring in any magical equipment.

Close Combat/Ranged Attack: The skill and accuracy of a unit's members.

Close Combat/Ranged Damage: The lethality of a unit's members.

Armor: The average protection provided by unit member's armor.

MAGNITUDE	MEMBERS	EQUIVALENT
0	1	Solo
1	2-15	Squad
2	16-50	Platoon
3	51-100	Company
4	101-250	—
5	251-500	Battalion
6	501-1,000	—
7	1,001-2,500	Regiment
8	2,501-5,000	Brigade
9	5001-10,000	Division

Morale: The courage and bravery of a unit.

Special Characters: A list of important characters within the unit's ranks.

Formation: A description of a unit's tactical arrangement.

MAGNITUDE

The Magnitude of a unit reflects the number of characters that are part of it. Large units can inflict more damage and absorb more casualties, but have more trouble executing orders quickly. Therefore, most military organizations break up their fighting force into manageable units, each led by a different commander. Furthermore, combined forces of infantry, armor and artillery are increasingly used in modern warfare, requiring smaller units of specialized troops to coordinate with each other on the battlefield.

The following table assumes that a given unit is made up of rank-and-file extras apart from the commander. If this is not the case, use the special character's health levels as a guide to determine the number of standard combatants a character type represents. For example, a hero has seven health levels instead of three. This means that every hero is worth slightly more than two regular unit members. Since heroes provide a substantial advantage, round their benefit up to three. Demigods and Gods might be worth considerably more, however.

When figuring out unit Magnitude, each value over nine has double the maximum membership of the previous rating, so a Magnitude of 10 would be 10,001 to 20,000 troops, 11 would be 20,0001 to 40,000 troops and so on.

TRAINING

The Training trait represents the military discipline and combat preparedness drilled into a unit. Highly trained units can rapidly change formation and

TRAINING	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLE
0	Untrained	Solo units; mobs; gangs
1	Green	Low quality troops; resistance fighters; raw recruits
2	Regular	Average troops; trained militia; standard infantry
3	Veteran	Good troops; US Marines; Waffen-SS
4	Elite	Excellent troops; British Commandos; US Army Rangers
5	Legendary	Superb troops; Alamo Scouts, US 6th Army Special Reconnaissance Unit; Easy Company, US 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment

tactics to respond to threats. Training also improves the survivability of unit members, keeping them in formation, ready for battle and fused together into a potent fighting force.

Training represents the special bond created between soldiers who have gone through intense training together. As such, it is not calculated based on the average statistics of unit members. Use the following table to determine a unit's Training rating.

ENDURANCE

No mortal man can march and fight indefinitely. Even the offspring of the Gods will tire of warfare and lay down their arms eventually. To reflect this, each unit has an Endurance trait that reflects its member's vigor and staying power. A complimentary unit has an Endurance rating equal to its (Training + Stamina). A solo unit has an Endurance rating equal to (Stamina + Fortitude). This trait decreases over the course of combat, and the unit suffers a -2 fatigue penalty on all actions if its Endurance ever drops to zero.

If unit members are not allowed to rest for several hours between battles, subtract the fatigue value of the troops' equipment and armor from their starting Endurance.

POWER

Instead of presenting rules for how each supernatural ability is used on the battlefield, **Scion** mass combat rules abstract various powers into a single rating that represents the combined mystical might of the unit. Use the following table to figure out a unit's Power rating, adding the best equipment bonus that applies (if any). In order to qualify for a bonus, the majority of unit members must possess the listed powers and/or equipment. Having a few Scions amongst a unit will increase its equivalent strength, but will not increase its Power rating. Instead, these individuals count as special characters (see p. 259). Few units have a Power rating higher than three during the modern era, even during the upheaval of the Second World War.

Bonuses	Equipment
+1	Enhanced items, Relic 1
+2	Special gifts, Relic 2-3
+3	Powerful artifacts, Relic 4-5
+4	Legendary objects, Relic 6+

CLOSE COMBAT/RANGED ATTACK RATING

Every complimentary unit has a Close Combat and Ranged Attack rating representing the general skill and accuracy of it members. A unit's attack rating is equal to the average (Dexterity + appropriate combat Ability) for all unit members, divided by two (remember, mortals generally round disadvantageously – see **Scion: Hero**, p. 174). A unit has access to its Close Combat rating only when equipped with the appropriate weaponry (e.g. bayonets, but not rifles). If every member of a unit carries the same weapon, as is usually the case in military units, the Accuracy of that weapon factors into the Attack rating before halving it. For example, a squad of Marines (Dexterity 3, Firearms 3) equipped with M1 Garands (Accuracy +3) would have a Ranged Attack rating of 4 (3+3+3 equals 9, half of which is 4.5). If a unit carries a mix of different weapons, such as in a French Resistance unit, average the Accuracy of the primary weapons carried by the unit members before calculating the attack rating as normal.

CLOSE COMBAT/RANGED DAMAGE

These traits represent the amount of damage a unit can inflict with a successful close combat or ranged attack. To determine a unit's Close Combat or Ranged Damage rating, average the damage rating of the primary weapons carried by the unit members. If each member is carrying the same weapon, simply use its damage rating. Remember to add the unit members' average Strength for close combat and primitive ranged weapons. For firearms, simply add one to the weapon damage to calculate raw damage. After determining the base damage rating, divide the total by three (rounding as appropriate to the unit type – up for Legendary units, down for mortals) to get the final Close Combat or Ranged Damage rating. For example, the aforementioned Marines with their M1 Garands (+8L) have a Ranged Damage rating of 2.

POWER	UNIT COMPOSITION
0	Strictly mortals; no supernatural abilities
1	Supernatural followers; limited powers
2	Young heroes; Legend 1-2
3	Powerful heroes; Legend 3-4
4	Demigods; Legend 5-8
5	Gods; Legend 9-12

ARMOR

Armor is rarely, if ever, used in warfare of this period. Scions and their loyal followers may go into battle wearing anachronistic armor. This trait represents the resilience and protection afforded by unit member's armor. To calculate a unit's Armor rating, divide the average soak of the troops by three, rounding as appropriate to the unit type. Likewise, the mobility penalty for a unit is equal to the average mobility penalty of its members. The fatigue value of armor comes into play during prolonged exertion, such as combat (see Endurance, above).

MORALE

Dwight D. Eisenhower said, "Morale is the single greatest factor in successful wars." Units with high morale can overcome larger and better-equipped units. Conversely, units with poor morale falter in the face of adversity and are more likely to break and run when confronted by an aggressive enemy. The Morale of a unit is equal to the lower of its members' average Virtue (such as Courage or Valor) or the appropriate Virtue rating of its commander. If the unit members are mortals and do not have Virtues, use half of their Willpower rating, rounded down, when calculating the unit's Morale rating. Units comprised of the walking dead or automata have perfect Morale even if their commander does not, and they automatically succeed on any Morale check.

SPECIAL CHARACTERS

In smaller units, the commander is often the only special character, inspiring his troops and leading them into battle. The unit will likely fall apart if the commander dies in battle, however. Therefore, larger units have lesser officers on hand who can assume command if the commander is killed. Conversely, larger units are harder to manage, and commanders need aides to help them maintain order, relay commands and call for support if necessary. In addition to maintaining order, units may also contain specialists such as medics, sappers and even Legendary creatures to give them an edge in battle.

A complimentary unit can have a maximum number of special characters equal to (Magnitude x 2), not counting unit commanders. Unless they are directly targeted (see p. 265), special characters always survive until the unit loses its last dot of Magnitude, at which point they heroically give their lives to protect the commander. At the end of a battle, or whenever a unit loses Magnitude away from the battlefield, special characters in excess of the unit's normal Magnitude limit must leave the unit unless sufficient replacements can be found to restore the unit to full fighting strength.

Individuals may be mixed and matched from the following roles.

SAMPLE MASS COMBAT UNITS

Experienced G.I. Squad: Magnitude 1; Training 3; Endurance 6; Power 0; Attack (ranged) 5; Damage (ranged) 2 L; Armor 0; Morale 3; Special Characters: Medic

French Resistance Mob: Magnitude 2; Training 0; Endurance 3; Power 0; Attack (ranged/close) 2/2; Damage (ranged/close) 1 L/1 B; Armor 0; Morale 2; Special Characters: none

German Regular Platoon: Magnitude 2; Training 2; Endurance 5; Power 0; Attack (ranged) 3; Damage (ranged) 2 L; Armor 0; Morale 2; Special Characters: Hero, Relay, Medic x 2

Hachiman's Jikininki Battalion: Magnitude 5; Training 4; Endurance 8; Power 1; Attack (close) 4; Damage (close) 3 L; Armor 0; Morale 3; Special Characters: Hero x 5

Hero: These special characters are subordinate officers who are capable of assuming command if their unit commander dies. Because they are capable of independent action, these characters may attack other units as if they were solo, effectively giving their unit an additional close combat or ranged attack. They may also lend their Close Combat or Ranged rating to his unit, using his trait instead of the unit leader's rating, but the trait is limited by the commander's Command rating (see "Attack," p. 264, for more on this limit). Specialist heroes such as snipers and sappers can use their special abilities in place of making an independent or supporting attack. Additionally, heroes may leave the main unit, taking some members with them and transforming the breakaway group into a new unit under their own command.

Medic: These special characters have no direct effect on the outcome of a battle but can help win the war, especially for military units that are short on manpower or cut off from reinforcements. Whenever a unit takes damage, the medic has the opportunity to treat the wounds and ensure that the wounded troops live to fight another day. Damage inflicted reduces the unit's health levels and Magnitude as normal, but once the battle is over, the medic can restore lost health levels to the unit. The number of health levels that a medic can "save" per turn is equal to his (Wits +Medicine) divided by three. Any damage in excess of this is lost permanently. Additional medics can work together, increasing the total number of health levels that can be saved per turn.

Relay: Arguably the most important special characters in an organized military unit are those that relay communications. Radio operators, signalmen and runners, they disseminate the commander's orders throughout the ranks, ensuring that each and every member is on task. Even more importantly, relays can call in artillery, air support and reinforcements when necessary. Units with a Magnitude greater than three must have at least one relay for every dot of Magnitude, or suffer from communication failure. Units suffering from poor communication suffer a -2 penalty to its effective Training rating. Besides handling communication, relays can stand in for the commander when the unit hesitates, tests for rout (see pp. 265–266) or whenever making immediate command decisions is vital.

FORMATION

Every military unit has a formation, representing how close together members are when they fight. In game terms, the exact shape of the unit deployment is less important than whether or not members are bunched together for close quarter combat or spread out to minimize casualties from artillery fire. Commanders can order one of four basic formations to suit the needs of a changing battlefield. In general, the tighter the ranks the more training it takes to learn how to fight this way.

Unordered (Training 0): This formation is little more than an unruly mob of combatants rallied around a charismatic leader. Unordered units may win battles through sheer numbers, but they are at a major disadvantage when fighting against professional soldiers. Typically only civilians or untrained militia fight in this formation, but even well-trained units may be forced into disorder if vital communication relays are disrupted at the right moment.

Relaxed (Training 1): The default formation, unit spacing is just wide enough for members march and fight next to each other without getting into each other's way. This formation walks the line between close and skirmish, providing none of the advantages nor suffering any of the drawbacks of either one.

Skirmish (Training 1): In this formation, unit members intentionally spread out to minimize casualties from ranged and area-effect attacks such machinegun, artillery and mortar fire. Mobility is also increased, but this formation makes it harder to defend against enemy infiltration of their ranks and leaves the unit vulnerable to close combat attacks.

Close (Training 2): In this formation, unit members close ranks and fight side-by-side, taking a stand and preventing enemies from breaking through. Close-formation fighting requires a lot of training, but units that master it gain bonuses to their defense and morale. Unfortunately, the tight-spacing makes the unit vulnerable ranged and area-effect attacks, especially machinegun, artillery and mortar fire. Because of the prevalence of these weapons on the modern battlefield, close formation is rarely used except in urban or heavily forested environments where ranged weapons are less effective.

OTHER UNIT RULES

Mass combat rules treat military units as abstract characters, but they are still groups of individuals. As a result, there are a few special rules modifications.

Targeting: Any power or special ability that targets one specific character may only be directed at the commander or a special character within the unit. It cannot be directed at the unit as a whole. Powers that extend to multiple targets or to a specific area must encompass most of a unit in order to affect it.

Conversely, a commander may use Boons and abilities to benefit himself or his unit's actions regardless of the unit's Magnitude. In this case, using the Boon does not count as a single use, but as a dramatic and repeated action that inspires or supports the unit's primary action. For example, a Scion could use the Work Harder Boon to reduce the fatigue penalties incurred by his unit's forced march. This might represent the commander shouldering each soldier's pack for a time, easing their collective burden and giving them a chance to rest. Additionally, a Scion may use Untouchable Opponent Knack to draw enemy fire away from his troops or the Body Armor Knack to defend them by throwing himself into harms way. Not every Boon or ability will translate as directly onto the battlefield, so players will have to come up with their own rationale for how to use a power. The Storyteller should veto anything that does not make sense, but as always should err on the side of fun and coolness whenever in doubt.

Penalties: In addition to the targeting limitations described above, complementary units do not suffer penalties unless they affect all unit members. Similarly, units cannot be knocked back, knocked down or crippled unless the effect encompasses the entire unit. If a unit is somehow knocked down or knocked back, it must immediately test for rout (see p. 265-266). Likewise, units may not be grappled, but may be Enveloped by a larger enemy unit (see p. 264).

ORDER OF BATTLE

DECLARATION OF WAR

Mass combat begins when the unit commander decides to join battle, just like in small-scale combat. The mechanics are slightly different, however. The roll to determine the unit's first action is ([Wits + Command] - Magnitude). Solo units and any special characters that wish to act separately from their unit make a (Wits + Awareness) roll as normal. Actions are resolved in order, just like in regular combat (see Combat in **Scion: Hero**, p. 187), except that mass combat uses long ticks representing approximately one minute each.

Surprise: Unexpected attacks in mass combat are resolved normally except that the attackers must be fully concealed in order to ambush another unit. Military units cannot surprise each other out in the open because a hostile unit's intentions become readily apparent once they are spotted by their enemy. The roll to concealing an attacking unit is ([Dexterity + Stealth] - Magnitude) and is resisted by rolling the commander's or any special character's highest (Perception + Awareness) to spot the ambush before the trap is sprung.

ACTIONS

The actions available in mass combat are similar to those found in regular combat. Each action has a Speed that determines how many long ticks must pass before the unit can act again plus a Defensive Value penalty that indicates how much the specific action impairs the unit's defense. While there are many similarities between small-scale and large-scale conflicts, the following special rules apply to mass combat.

MOVE

Units move at (normal Move x speed modifier) yards per long tick. The speed modifier is based on the current unit formation. Solo characters use their Dexterity when calculating their normal move while complimentary units use the average Dexterity of the unit members. Any applicable wound or mobility penalties are factored in before applying the speed modifier.

Formation	Speed Modifier
Solo	x100
Unordered	x30
Relaxed	x70
Skirmish	x100
Close	x40

Terrain: While terrain plays less of a role in small-scale conflicts, it is much more important in mass combat. Units gain the usual DV bonuses for height (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 193), but use the following guidelines for cover: tall grass, low fences or fallen logs (30%); forest, rubble field or machinegun nest (60%); trenches, foxholes or concrete bunkers (90%). If multiple conditions apply, use only the highest bonus.

In addition to providing bonuses for cover and height, terrain also affects movement.

Open: Terrain is considered open if it provides 30% cover or less and contains no obstacles that would impede movement. Examples include farmland, meadows and roads. Any unit can move freely through open terrain.

Difficult: Terrain is considered difficult if it provides 60% cover or less and includes obstacles that impede swift movement. Examples include forests, heavily bombed cities and areas protected by field fortifications such as barbed wire and tank traps. Infantry units may move normally but cannot dash, and tanks may move at half speed. All other vehicles cannot pass though difficult terrain at all.

Extreme: Terrain is considered extreme if it provides 90% cover or less and includes obstacles and barriers that make movement all but impossible. Examples include thick jungle, swampland and field fortifications such as barricades and hedgerows. Infantry units may move at half speed, and anything larger cannot pass through at all. Barriers may be attacked just like regular objects, however (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 201). Destroying a section opens a path large enough for unit to pass through using a full move action.

Vehicles: Marching is not always the quickest or safest way to travel. As such, vehicles are often used to deploy fresh troops to the battlefield. Infantry may be loaded onto trucks, hitch a ride on passing tanks or parachute out of the sky to get them into the fight. There must be enough vehicles to transport the entire unit for them to gain any benefit, however.

Vehicle	Movement per Long Tick
Armored Car	600 yards
Motorcycle	900 yards
Tank	300 yards
Truck	500 yards
Towed Artillery	1/2 vehicle speed

DASH

A dash in mass combat is called a charge or forced march. Units dash at ([normal Move + 6] x speed modifier) yards per long tick. Normal Move and speed modifiers are determined just like in regular unit movement (see above). Individuals can dash at will, but coordinating unit charge takes some skill. To keep the unit in formation during the charge, the commander's player must roll (Charisma + Command) against a difficulty equal to (Magnitude – Training) with a minimum difficulty of 1. Failure causes the unit to become unordered, severely reducing the speed of the charge and losing any tactical advantage of the original formation. Immediately after making a charge, the Endurance of the unit decreases by the average fatigue value of any armor or equipment carried by the unit.

GUARD

Taking this action focus a unit on defense, useful for defending a fixed location or advancing under fire.

INACTIVE

A unit remains inactive whenever it is incapable of taking any other action in mass combat. This may be due to a supernatural power or chemical weapon, but these circumstances rarely come up in play since such attacks must encompass the entire unit in order to have any effect. Therefore, solo units are far more likely to become inactive during mass combat.

MISCELLANEOUS ACTION

In addition to the standard actions available in a small-scale conflict, there are a number of additional actions specific to mass combat.

Change Formation (Speed 5, -1 DV): Unit commanders may rearrange a unit for maximum tactical advantage, spreading troops out to prevent casualties from artillery fire or forming close ranks in preparation for a bayonet charge. Changing formation requires the player to roll the (Charisma + Command) of the commander or the best relay against a difficulty of (Magnitude - Training) with a minimum difficulty of 1. The difficulty is +1 if the unit was attacked since its last action and +2 if it is currently engaged with an enemy unit. The benefits and drawbacks of the new formation take effect immediately.

Disengage (Speed 0, -0 DV): Complementary units become engaged as soon as one of them attacks the other in close combat. In order for the two units to separate, one of them must perform a Disengage action. Doing so requires a successful roll of ([Wits + Training] - Magnitude) against a difficulty of (the opposing unit's Training + 3). Failure means that the retreat is blocked, but the acting unit may attempt to Disengage again on its next turn.

Turn (Speed 3, -1 DV): Solo units can pivot freely in any direction to face their enemy, but larger units are less nimble. Complementary units can reflexively change their facing by 90 degrees on any long tick that they normally take an action. Turning more than 90 degrees on one turn requires the player to roll (Charisma + Command) of the commander or the best relay against a difficulty of (Magnitude - Training) with a minimum difficulty of 1.

If a unit is attacked from the rear, it suffers the usual disadvantages of an unexpected attack (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 199).

Split Unit (Speed 3, -1 DV): Sometimes a larger unit will split into two smaller units, usually so it can pursue separate objectives. No roll is required to do so, but the parent unit must have a spare hero character to take over command of the new unit. Calculate the Magnitude of the new units based on the number of unit members assigned to each, including any special characters. Parent units always lose a minimum of one Magnitude dot following a

split, even if the number of members lost would not normally require it, because of the disruption caused by dividing the unit.

If a new unit does not have sufficient relays, it suffers a communications failure (see p. 260). Additionally, both units may hesitate and become unordered. To prevent this, the player may roll (Charisma + Command) of the commander or best relay in each unit against a difficulty of (Magnitude - Training) with a minimum difficulty of 1. Add two to the difficulty if the original unit was engaged with another unit at the time of the split.

Solo characters: It is much easier for a single character to leave a military unit than to divide the entire fighting force. Solo units may split from a unit as a reflexive action with a Speed 0, -0 DV at any time. Conversely, an individual may be expelled from a unit against his will in the same manner. No roll is required, but the expelled character may attempt to directly attack his former commander (see p. 265).

Merge Units (Speed 3, -1 DV): When necessary, two friendly units can combine forces to create a larger, stronger unit. Most commonly this is done to compensate for severe casualties. Both units must be adjacent and the commanders must consent to the merge. One of them has to initiate the action, but both players must make a reflexive (Charisma + Command) roll against a difficulty of (original unit's Magnitude - Training) with a minimum difficulty of 1. If either fails, the merge is unsuccessful, and one (or both) units hesitate (see pp. 265-266). If the roll is successful, the two groups merge and the new unit's Magnitude is calculated using the total combined membership, including special characters. Either commander may take command of the new unit, but if there is a dispute, the commander of the larger unit (or the one that rolled highest if both units were the same size) retains control. The former commander may become a special character within the new unit as long as there is room within the new unit. Any special characters in excess of the maximum must leave the unit immediately become solo characters.

Special characters: Two units may transfer or exchange special characters as long as both units are adjacent. Both unit commanders' players must make Merge Unit rolls as described above. If successful, both units may transfer any number of special characters, up to the maximum allowed per unit. Failure means that the transfer is delayed until they can try again. Additionally, this roll also covers solo units that wish to join up with a complementary unit, except that the joining character's player does not need to make a roll.

Signal Units (Speed 3, -1 DV): Maintaining clear lines of communication is vital to winning a battle. Radio operators are regularly called upon to relay orders, call for reinforcements and coordinate attacks with other units. This action may be used to send messages to a maximum number of units equal to the number of relays the sender has in its ranks. Such messages are usually coded to prevent interception, but may be sent in the clear if the commander chooses, such as when contacting an enemy unit.

Rally (Speed 4, -1 DV): Good commanders know how to inspire soldiers and lead them to victory. Rallying requires the commander to address his troops, giving them a short speech or rallying cry, after which his player should roll (Charisma + Command) against a difficulty of (Magnitude - Training) with a minimum difficulty of 1. The effects of a successful rally depend on the commander's objective:

Relay: Success turns a regular unit member into a relay, provided this does not take the unit over its limit of special characters. This represents the commander appointing a new runner, replacing a wounded radio operator or giving a soldier a battlefield promotion.

Recruit: Success draws scattered allies to the unit's cause, increasing its Magnitude by 1, provided there are enough unorganized troops nearby to justify the increase (such as after a larger unit has lost Magnitude). If so, assume that the unit has the minimum number of members for its new Magnitude. If the unit does not have enough relays to accommodate its new Magnitude, suffers from communications failure until the commander rallies sufficient relays (see p. 260). This represents the commander bolstering the courage of broken troops or recruiting a group of retreating troops for a counter-attack.

Recover: Success restores a number of Endurance points equal to the unit's Training rating (minimum 1), but it cannot increase the value above the unit's starting level. This action represents the commander inspiring his troops to redouble their efforts, refuse to give up or fight harder in defense of all they hold dear.

ACTIVATE BOON, KNACK OR POWER

In mass combat, commanders, special characters and solo units may use Boons, Knacks and powers on any long tick that they normally take an action. Additionally, these characters may use a reflexive ability at any time, even if they have used another power recently. Rank-and-file characters may not use special abilities during mass combat, as their mystical abilities are already factored into the Power trait. Unless stated differently, Boons and Knacks that last until the end of the scene last until the end of the battle in mass combat.

Using Magic spells is a little different, however. Characters capable of spellcasting may do so as a

Speed 5, DV-2 action. Spells that take longer than five minutes to cast will take the appropriate amount of additional long ticks. Also, if a unit leader casts a spell, it counts as the entire unit's action, as they provide him support and cover. Therefore, it is often better to leave the spellcasting to special characters within the unit.

ATTACK

For the most part, attacks in mass combat are resolved the same was as in regular combat. A unit's assault represents a sustained volley of fire or clash of arms instead of a single attack, however. Military units also track health levels a little differently. Most importantly, complimentary units grant bonuses to its commander's attack rolls under certain circumstances.

Unit Bonuses: A complimentary unit uses its leader's statistics, but provides bonuses based on the training, equipment and quantity of its members. Whenever a unit commander takes an action, his player uses the normal Ability or Command rating, whichever is less. Therefore, the Command rating acts as a cap for all other Abilities in mass combat. For example, a commander with Dexterity 3, Firearms 4 and Command 3 has an effective Firearms rating of 3 and a total dice pool of 6.

A commander adds his unit's Close Combat and Ranged Attack rating as bonus successes to close combat and ranged attacks, respectively, applying this bonus to any successes generated by the attack roll. The total number of bonus successes cannot exceed the commander's Command rating before applying any formation bonuses, however. Therefore, the commander with Command 3 leading a unit with a Ranged Attack rating of 4 would only get to add three bonus successes to his attack roll. If attacking a unit in close formation, the effective number of successes doubles, allowing him to add six successes. After adding in the number of bonus successes based on combat skills, a unit gets to add a number of additional successes equal to its Power rating. Therefore, a veteran unit of berserks with a Close Combat Attack rating of 5 and a Power of 1 commanded by a character with Command 4 would add five successes to close combat attack rolls.

Magnitude can play a major role in the success of an attack. A larger unit gains bonus successes on its attack rolls equal to the difference in Magnitude between itself and the smaller unit. It also subtracts the difference in Magnitude from the successes generated by the smaller unit's attack rolls. The bonus provided by excess Magnitude cannot exceed three successes, however. Only so many soldiers can fight the same enemy at the same time, after all.

Additionally, a unit's Power rating grants a bonus to the commander's effective Legend rating for the purpose of resisting hostile Boons, Knacks and spells. Close Combat and Ranged Damage each add their rating as bonus successes to the damage generated by close and ranged attacks, respectively. Likewise, a unit's Armor value adds bonus successes to the commander's bashing, lethal and aggravated soak. Furthermore, if the commander chooses to parry in close combat, he adds one half the unit's Close Combat Attack rating as a bonus to his Parry DV.

Formation modifiers:

- *Close formation* doubles the unit's Close Combat Attack rating as well as doubling the DV bonuses for cover against close combat attacks (if any). Enemy units making ranged or indirect fire attack double their effective Magnitude when determining attack bonuses. Units in close formation also subtract two from the difficulty of all hesitation rolls (see pp. 265-266).

- *Relaxed formation* doubles cover bonuses (if any) against ranged attacks.

- *Skirmish formation* doubles cover bonuses (if any) against all attacks and gain an additional +3 DV bonus against ranged and indirect fire attacks. Enemy units making a close combat attack double their effective Magnitude when determining attack bonuses. If the attacking unit is in close formation, it triples its effective Magnitude. Units in skirmish formation add two to the difficulty of all hesitation rolls.

- *Unordered formation* adds two to the difficulty of hesitation rolls.

Ranged Attacks: A unit making a ranged attack fires a volley of shots or a sustained artillery barrage at a target. As such, every attack consumes three ammunition instead of the normal one. The range increment for a ranged attack is based on the average equipment carried by the troops rather than any specialized equipment carried by the commander. Special characters armed with superior weapons are not limited by the unit's standard equipment, however. Snipers and bazooka men may make independent attacks using their own weapons on any long tick that they normally take an action.

Enveloping: To envelop a target, the attacking unit spreads out and surrounds the enemy, trapping it in place. The attacker must be in close combat range and have a Magnitude greater than the target unit. The attack roll suffers a -2 penalty to perform the maneuver, but if successful the enemy unit is trapped in place. Add three to the difficulty of the trapped unit to disengage and one to the difficulty if the larger unit wishes to disengage. The envelopment continues until either unit disengages or is defeated.

Direct Attacks: Killing a commander or special character can cripple or destroy a unit, making assassination an ideal method of defeating a larger force. Enemy commanders are aware of this and take steps to protect themselves, however. They will often remove any sign of rank and stay where their unit can protect them. An attack that directly targets a commander suffers a penalty equal to half the target unit's Training or Magnitude, rounded up. Use the lower of Training or Magnitude if the target unit is unordered. Otherwise, use the higher rating when calculating the attack penalty. An attack that directly targets a special character is handled in the same way, but the effective Magnitude is doubled when calculating the penalty. Additionally, only ranged attacks may directly target a commander or special character unless the units are engaged in close combat.

The target of a direct attack may defend normally, and any damage inflicted applies directly to the victim instead of to the unit. If a commander is slain, another special character must take his place or else the unit becomes unordered and the unit's statistics are recalculated as if an average member were in command.

Unit Damage: The base damage inflicted by a unit in mass combat is equal to its Magnitude. Complimentary units begin play with full health equal to the commander's maximum, regardless of his current wound level. A unit composed entirely of average troops would only have an average character's base health levels. Therefore, units led by heroic leaders are tougher and have higher survivability rates, and armies try to put talented people in command wherever possible.

When units take damage, they lose health levels until they reach Incapacitated, at which point they lose a dot of Magnitude and their health rating is reset to full. Whenever a unit loses Magnitude from a single attack, the commander must check for rout. Once a unit is reduced to zero Magnitude, every member is dead save the former commander, whose health remains wherever it was at the start of the battle.

Few troops possess the discipline to fight to the last man, however. Most often units suffer hesitation or route completely as they lose Magnitude due to damage.

Casualties: Not every character that is lost when a unit loses Magnitude is killed. Some flee or are wounded and retreat to from the battlefield to recuperate. But people do die in battle, especially if they do not receive timely medical attention. After a battle, players of commanders or their best medics can roll (Wits + Medicine) against a difficulty equal to the largest number of Magnitude lost in any one attack. Reduce the difficultly by one if the unit's Morale is 3 or higher or reduce the difficulty by two if the unit has perfect Morale (minimum difficulty of 1). Repeat the roll for each dot of Magnitude lost during the battle. If successful, the troops represented by the lost Magnitude have recovered and return to the unit, raising membership up to the minimum number required for the new Magnitude level. If the unit regains a point of Magnitude, it also regains full health. If the roll fails, the soldiers represented by lost Magnitude were killed in action and replacements will have to be recruited normally (see below).

EXHAUSTION

Every time a unit attacks or defends itself, it loses a point of Endurance. Players of commanders or their best relays can avert this loss by making a reflexive (Charisma + Command) roll against a difficulty equal to the fatigue value of the troops' equipment and armor (if any). A number of circumstances may modify this roll, adding or subtracting from the difficulty value (minimum 1).

Circumstance	Difficulty Modifier
Unit's Morale 3+	-1
Unit has perfect Morale	-2
Unit is engaged with enemy unit	+2
Unit charged as last action	+1
Hot or snowy weather	+1
Desert or blizzard	+2
Extreme temperatures	+3

Units reduced to zero Endurance suffer a -2 penalty on all actions due to fatigue.

HEALING AND RECRUITMENT

Solo units recover from wounds just like the normal characters, but complimentary units do not simply regenerate lost manpower. Instead, they must spend a period of time recruiting reinforcements and integrating them into the unit. Restoring a single health level takes a number of days equal to (current Magnitude + 1), and repeating the cycle as necessary until the unit is back at full fighting strength. Once the unit regains its first point of Magnitude, it also regains full health.

HESITATION AND ROUT

Fear and doubt can be fatal on the battlefield. Units that believe themselves beaten have already lost, even if they have superior numbers. Whenever a unit experiences a rout condition, roll its Morale against a difficulty of 1, adding modifiers according to the event that triggered the rout check.

If the roll succeeds, then nothing happens. On a failure, the unit hesitates and cannot move until its next action. It also loses a dot of Magnitude for every success by which it failed (so a roll of 1 success against a difficulty of 3 would lose two dots of Magnitude).

The loss takes place immediately, but has the dubious benefit of restoring the unit's health to full. The loss of manpower does not include special characters unless their total number exceeds the maximum allowed by the new Magnitude. In this case, they leave immediately along with the rest of the fleeing troops.

Event	Difficulty Mod.
Suffering Magnitude loss from damage	+0
Receiving the first ranged attack since the unit's last action	+0
Receiving a chemical, biological, or supernatural attack	+1
Becoming engaged with an enemy unit	+0
...that is superior in number or training	+1
...that is composed of supernatural beings	+2
Successfully disengaging from an enemy unit	+1

SPECIAL CHARACTER ACTIONS

Special characters do not have to be tracked as their own characters unless they choose to act independently of their unit. In this case, the player of the unit makes a Join Battle roll as if he were a solo unit joining the battle. Otherwise, the character acts on the long tick when his unit takes an action. Once a character separates to take his own action, he will continue to be tracked separately until he elects to "fall back into line" on his next action.

When a special character acts independently from his unit, he does not gain any of the benefits of the unit except for the increased difficulty to target him with a direct attack (see p. 265). Special characters must attack an enemy that is engaged with their unit or within range of their weapons. If a hero wishes to run off to engage another target or get close enough to make a ranged attack, he must leave and become a solo unit or lead a breakaway group as commander of his own unit.

MILITARY EQUIPMENT

The pure destructive force of weapons in the 1940s leaves nothing to be desired. True, weapons of the future will be a little less bulky and a little more accurate, but the world has never before or since seen such raw destructive force unleashed. In order to blow stuff up, you need the right equipment. Courage, patriotism and high ideals aren't worth much if the other side is coming at you with panzers and bombers.

FIREARMS

Colt .45: This is the standard sidearm of the U.S. military. It is reliable and has good stopping power.

Luger: The most prized trophy of Allied soldiers, the Luger went out of production in 1942 due to the high manufacturing costs. Still, it remains a badge of authority among Nazi officers.

Lee-Einfield No. 4: The standard rifle of British troops, this weapon is fairly representative of infantry rifles the world over, though it has above-average accuracy and ammo capacity.

M1 Garand: The Garand rifle is a well made, highly versatile rifle that is used in every branch of the U.S. military. Its distinctive feed system gave rise to the phrase "lock and load." The Garand's only real drawback is that it automatically ejects empty magazines. If the ejected magazine hits hard ground, any enemy within earshot will know that the soldier is in need of a reload.

MP40: Allied soldiers nicknamed this sub-machinegun "Schmeisser" after a famous German arms designer—who, incidentally, had no part in making this weapon. The MP40 is compact, efficient, reliable and lightweight. This weapon is capable of automatic fire.

WEAPON	ACC.	DAMAGE	RANGE	CLIP	SPEED	TAGS
Colt .45	+2	+4L	20	8	5	P
Luger	+3	+3L	20	8	4	P
Lee-Einfield No. 4	+3	+7L	200	10	6	P
M1 Garand	+3	+7L	150	8	5	P
MP40	+0	+3L	30	30	5	P
Meiji 38	+3	+6L	200	5	6	P
PPSh	+0	+3L	30	70	5	P
Sturmgewehr Stu .44	+0	+5L	100	30	5	P
Thompson M1	+0	+4L	30	20	5	P

Meiji 38: The most common rifle among the Japanese Imperial forces, the Meiji 38 is cheaply made but surprisingly reliable. Despite a push to re-issue a variant with a larger caliber, millions of these slightly underpowered rifles continue to be carried by Japanese soldiers throughout Asia and the Pacific.

PPSh: The Soviet government authorized the widespread production of this stripped down sub-machinegun when their manufacturers demonstrated that a single rifle could be recycled to provide many of the parts for two PPSh sub-machineguns. As standard infantry armament, the short range of this weapon is not much of a drawback in the point-blank urban fighting common to the Russian war experience. This weapon is capable of automatic fire.

Sturmgewehr Stu .44: The first weapon to successfully blend the rifle and the sub-machinegun, the Sturmgewehr assault rifle is in high demand among the German army after Hitler's personal guard took it as their standard firearm. This weapon is capable of automatic fire.

Thompson M1: With heavy stopping power despite its slow rate of fire, the Thompson is an American tradition. The only drawback is that it is very expensive to produce. This weapon is capable of automatic fire.

HEAVY WEAPONS

As powerful as infantry weapons seem, the modern battlefield demands much more. Only heavy weapons have the capability of cracking tank armor, knocking planes out of the sky or sweeping an entire field of enemy soldiers in a few blasts. Many heavy weapons have the capabilities of a blast radius and indirect fire, both of which require a few extra considerations.

Blast Radius: Bombs, hand grenades, and artillery shells are among the many weapons designed to fill an area with flame, shrapnel or both. These can be useful for striking at targets that are high in the air, very far away or well-entrenched behind cover. They can also be useful for shredding large numbers of soldiers who make the mistake of standing too closely to each other. Anyone directly hit by a weapon with a blast radius suffers the full damage. For each ten feet beyond that, the amount of damage is reduced by 5L. When the damage is reduced to zero, the explosion has reached the limits of its area. Therefore, a grenade landing in a soldier's lap will do 15L to him, 10L to anyone within ten feet of him and 5L to anyone from 10 to 20 feet away. This damage obviously cannot be blocked or parried, but the DV bonuses for cover or being prone apply to the victim's Soak rating instead. Extra successes on an attack roll only apply to damage on the recipient of a direct hit, not with those caught in the blast radius.

Indirect Fire: Many weapons can fire indirectly, which means that they do not require line of sight and can often achieve much greater range. Some of the biggest guns can actually launch shells through the stratosphere to hit targets a hundred and fifty miles away. When firing indirectly, consult the sidebar and then select a target area the size of the deviation rating for the distance to the target (or the minimum deviation as indicated in the weapon's description). If the distance is more than 500 feet, one action must be spent finding the range before the first shot can be fired. If the target is out of sight, the gunner must have coordinates relayed to him from a spotter in the field.

For indirect fire, the gunner rolls (Intelligence + Marksmanship) for most weapons, or (Dexterity + Thrown) for hand grenades and the like against a difficulty of 5. Threshold successes do not add to damage, but equaling or beating the difficulty means that the projectile comes down on a random spot within the target area. On each subsequent attack against the same target, the difficulty is reduced by 1. Once the gunner achieves success, all subsequent attacks will hit the targeted area until the gunner chooses a new target.

DISTANCE TO TARGET	DEVIATION*	TIME TO TARGET (TICKS)**
100 feet or less	5 feet	0
101-500 feet	10 feet	4
500 feet-1 mile	20 feet	8
1-3 miles	40 feet	16
More than 3 miles	60 feet	24 or more

* Some weapons have a minimum deviation. Check weapon description for specifics.

** Time is in regular ticks. Time to target is always one long tick in mass combat.

If the indirect fire misses the target, the projectile still comes down somewhere. In most situations, the Storyteller may simply rule that it is unlikely to land anywhere important, but if friendly units are perilously close to the area or if the environment is particularly "target-rich" then it may be critical to know where it lands. To determine this, roll a single die to determine a direction at random (1 = North, 2 = Northeast and so on, with 9 and 10 being Storyteller's choice). Start at the edge of the targeted area and move in the direction indicated on the roll for a number of feet equal to the deviation times the number of successes by which the gunner missed.

Example: Lt. Washington and his spotter need to drop some shells on a Nazi bivouac over the ridge, 450 feet away. Fate is not with Washington on his first roll; he needed 5 successes but only scores 1, which means his shell misses the outermost edge of his original targeted area by 40 feet (4 successes short of the target times 10' deviation). The Storyteller rules that it lands harmlessly in a nearby field, and now the enemy knows they're under attack.

Washington's indirect fire difficulty drops to 4 on his second shot, and this time he rolls 3 successes. The Storyteller rolls for direction and determines that the shell hit a hedgerow ten feet shy of the target, which may be significant later as it opens a hole in what would have otherwise been a significant obstacle. On the third action, Washington hits the new target difficulty of 3, which means that he can drop shells right on the enemy position as long as they stay there.

Many indirectly fired weapons, including hand grenades, may also be aimed directly. In this case, the attacker must have a line of sight and follow all the usual rules for hitting a target point.

For firing indirectly over great distances, the projectile can take time to reach its target (see "Time to Target" on the Indirect Fire Chart). This doesn't help most mortals, but Scions with sufficient Perception or Dexterity can sometimes see a shell coming and get the hell out of its way.

Bombs and Shells as Environmental Conditions: Artillery is both powerful and indiscriminant, easily capable of dispatching hero-level Scions in a single hit. In real life combat, survival may sometimes depend on a proverbial roll of the dice, but randomly and impersonally snuffing out protagonists doesn't make for a good story. Unless the characters are powerful enough to take it, use heavy explosives such as artillery and bombs as an environmental condition. While being shelled, the characters suffer an amount of lethal damage ranging from 1L/minute to as much as 5L/Action, with a Trauma rating between 1 and 5, all depending on the force of the explosives (see "Environmental Effects, **Scion: Hero**, pp. 182-184). This represents the overall average of the various bombs falling all around them, and can add up to significant danger for those operating in the open during a shelling.

HEAVY WEAPON TAGS AND SPECIAL AMMO

Weapons with the "B" tag have the Blast Radius effect (p. 267). Some weapons may add or lose a tag by using certain types of ammunition.

Armor Piercing (AP): Loaded with a tungsten slug designed to crack through thick armor, weapons firing this ammo lose the "B" tag but gain +5L damage. (Bazookas and cannon only)

Flak: Designed as an anti-aircraft weapon but equally effective at engulfing enemy soldiers in clouds of shrapnel, weapons using flak shells pick up the "B" tag but lose the "P" tag. (Cannon only)

Shaped Charge: This hollow charge, high explosive shell burns through armor in a focused burst of molten metal and superheated gases. The weapon using this ammo loses the "B" tag. However, when a vehicle loses health levels due to this explosive, all occupants of the vehicle receive an equal amount of lethal fire damage, which they may soak as normal. (Bazookas and cannon only)

Tracer: Every fifth bullet has a pyrotechnic fixture so it glows brightly when fired, allowing a gunner to see where the bullets are going. Using tracers increase a weapon's accuracy by +1, but they can also give away the gun's position in a hurry. (Machineguns only)

Weapon	Acc.	Damage	Range (Direct/Indirect)	Clip	Speed	Tags
Artillery, Small	+1	+15L	—/2,500	5	8	B
Artillery, Large	+0	+40L	—/8,000	1	8	B
Bazooka	-2	+20L	300/—	1	8	B, P
Bomb, 125lb	-4	+25L	0/0	1	n/a	B
Bomb, 250lb	-4	+50L	0/0	1	n/a	B
Bomb, 500lb	-4	+100L	0/0	1	n/a	B
Cannon, Light	+0	+15 L	250/500	1	6	P
Cannon, Generic	+0	+25L	500/1,000	1	6	P
Cannon, 88mm	+0	+30L	1,000/2,000	1	6	P
Hand Grenade	+0	+15L	15/10	1	5	B
Machinegun, generic	+1	+10L	300/1,800	belt	6	P
MG 42	+2	+11L	400/2,400	belt	6	P
Mortar	-1	+15L	—/2,000	1	8	B
Nebelwerfer Rocket	-4	+30L	—/1,500	6	8	B

Artillery, Small: Small artillery is usually drawn by truck, but it may also be built into vehicles to create mobile gun platforms. It takes three actions to fire small artillery, but these actions can be performed simultaneously by multiple crewmembers. This weapon may only be fired indirectly or at aircraft, and cannot hit targets closer than 200 feet. This weapon has a minimum deviation of 20 feet.

Artillery, Large: Huge artillery guns are often part of large battleships or built as railroad cars because they are too massive to be transported in any other way. It takes nine actions to fire a single round, but these actions can be performed simultaneously by multiple crewmembers. This weapon may only be fired indirectly or at aircraft, and it cannot hit targets closer than 400 feet. This weapon has a minimum deviation of 30 feet.

Bazooka: Designed to take the smirks off the faces of the panzer commanders, this shoulder-mounted rocket launcher allows foot soldiers to challenge heavy armor. A two-man crew can load and fire this weapon in a single round; a lone operator must spend an action loading between each shot.

Bomb: Bombs may be dropped from a plane or installed as warheads in devices such as torpedoes or V-1 rockets. To drop a bomb from a plane, treat a bomb as though it is an indirect fire weapon and roll (Dexterity +

Control) to determine whether it hits the target and by how much it might deviate.

Cannon, Light: These are often used as light anti-tank weapons or as armament in fighter planes.

Cannon, Generic: These may be mounted as vehicular weapons or may be made free-standing or semi-portable for use as infantry support or anti-tank fire.

Cannon, 88mm: The dreaded cannon typical of many German army support guns and heavy panzers.

Hand Grenade: Pulling the pin and throwing a grenade is a (5/-2) action. The grenade detonates 6 ticks after it has left the hand of the thrower, so heroic soldiers might have enough time to throw it back or dive on it to shield their buddies from the blast. The German "Potato Masher" hand grenade is much more bulky than the Allied version, but it grants +5 feet to the range. Several types of grenades may also be fired from rifles, with a base range of 50 feet.

Machinegun, generic: Machineguns are widely used both for anti-infantry and anti-air attacks. They are typically fed ammo on a belt, and burn that ammo at twice the rate of other weapons capable of automatic fire. Usually, machineguns and their ammo must be carried by three men. To fire a machinegun from the hip, a character would need at least one point of Epic Strength, and the heat from holding the gun without a tripod or other mounting causes 1L per action with a Trauma rating of 1 (although the Fire Boon Fire Immunity from **Scion: Hero**, p. 142, can negate this damage).

MG 42: This is the machinegun design that revolutionized infantry tactics. It is light, powerful, highly versatile and easy to produce.

Mortar: The mortar frees infantry from having to call in artillery strikes by allowing them to carry their own artillery with them. A two-man crew can load and fire this weapon in a single action; a lone operator must spend an action loading between each shot.

Nebelwerfer Rocket: Allied soldiers nicknamed these weapons "Screaming Meemies" and "Moaning Minnies" for the peculiar sound they make. Despite its inherent imprecision, rocket artillery was much feared for its powerful payloads. This weapon may only be fired indirectly and cannot hit targets closer than 100 feet. It has a minimum deviation of 40 feet.

VEHICLE COMBAT

While it is theoretically possible for a mob boss to get his hands on a Messerschmitt and strafe his enemies in the streets of Chicago, such things simply aren't the norm in civilian life. On the other hand, the size, power, and ubiquity of fighting vehicles is one of the key features of a modern warzone. Vehicular combat is detailed in **Scion: Hero** (pp. 200-201), but takes on a new importance in a World War Two story.

Large airplanes, battleships and aircraft carriers are only a few of the World War Two vehicles that are so large as to more closely resemble locations than objects. However, Scions fighting on or in these vehicles can cause collateral damage that could

VEHICLE	ARMOR	MASS	MAN.	HEALTH LEVELS
B-17	10	18	-4	40
Battleship	15	14,000	-10	25,000
Bomber, Generic	10	10	-4	20
C-47	8	10	-4	20
Lexington	15	36,000	-10	50,000
Messerschmitt	8	4	+2	15
P-51 Mustang	8	4	+3	20
Tank, Generic	12	10	-4	30
Tiger Ausf. E	15	15	-4	40
U-Boat	10	1,000	-6	500
Yamato	15	65,000	-10	75,000
Zero	4	2	+4	15

destroy their own transportation. Any attack with a blast radius (or other area of effect) that strikes a character in the open on such a vehicle—for example, standing on the deck of a battleship or hanging on the wing of a B-17—also strikes the vehicle. Treat any such attack as a direct hit against the vehicle, in addition to whatever damage it might do to the targeted character. If fighting inside a vehicle, this rule also applies, and in addition any ranged attack which misses its intended target should be considered a hit to the vehicle instead. These attacks count towards the onslaught penalty for the vehicle's DV as the pilot or driver must compensate for the force of the blow. In the case of most large vehicles, these stray attacks don't pose much of a threat, but a careless shootout in the belly of a bomber or within a submerged U-Boat can lead to disastrous results.

Another circumstance that doesn't come up often in civilian life is air-to-ground combat. For the most part, this is handled just like any other vehicular combat, with the exception of altitude differentials. Altitude has three rough categories, with each category granting a DV bonus to the aircraft. These categories are low-flying (+1 DV), high-flying (+2 DV) and mile-high (+3 DV). Consider low-flying planes to be within 100 feet and therefore reachable by most conventional weapons, high-flying to run beyond the reach of infantry weapons and mile-high to be reachable only by artillery and certain other heavy weapons. This distance is a penalty to both parties: ground targets get the same DV bonus as the aircraft, and the difficulty of indirect-fire weapons such as dropped bombs increases by the same amount.

B-17: The four-engine Boeing B-17G "Flying Fortress" is of the most influential fighting vehicles of the war, and can be seen pummeling the German infrastructure virtually every day. The B-17 is simply a tough bird, capable of sustaining immense damage and still staying in the air. It is armed with 13 machineguns and carries 5,000 to 8,000 pounds of bombs on most missions.

Battleship: Although smaller gunships are generally more cost efficient, big battleships are still kings of the sea. They usually pack multiple artillery batteries, torpedo tubes and scores of machineguns. As a rule, Allied battleships in the Atlantic are also fitted with depth-charges and the latest sonar equipment.

Bomber, Generic: There are a bewildering variety of bombers in the skies above both Allied and Axis cities. Most are armed with three to six machineguns and carry bomb loads of one or two tons.

C-47: The U.S. Military has adopted the McDonald-Douglas C-47 (DC-3) as its standard cargo and transport plane. It is used for everything from maintaining supply chains to delivering paratroopers into enemy territory.

Lexington: Comprising the largest U.S. aircraft carriers in service for most of World War Two, the Lexington class carriers play a pivotal role in the Pacific theater. They house 91 aircraft and sport a dozen light cannon and artillery.

Messerschmitt: One of the most successful and versatile designs in military aviation history, the Messerschmitt Bf 109 is destined to become increasingly obsolete as the war progresses. Different variants carry as many as four machineguns or two light cannon with eight shells each.

P-51 Mustang: Arguably the best one-man plane in the sky, the P-51 had endurance enough to escort heavy bombers through their entire mission and agility enough to dogfight any enemy fighter. It is usually armed with 6 machineguns. It can also serve as a dive bomber, carrying up to one ton of bombs but suffering -2 Maneuverability until these bombs are dropped.

Tank, Generic: World War Two saw many tank designs. Most are armed with a cannon in a turret and a machinegun mounted on the side or in a hull mount.

Tiger Ausf. E: The Tiger is the Nazi's terror tank. It can destroy most other tanks from the distance of a half a mile or more, and its own armor is proof against many other tank weapons even at point blank range. Its only weakness is its notorious tendency for mechanical breakdowns, which has led to more Tigers being lost to engine failure than to enemy fire. The Tiger is armed with an 88mm cannon and a coaxial machinegun, with a second machinegun in a hull mount.

U-Boat: Many nations have submarines, but Germany has a tradition of using them to the greatest effect. Still, life on board is cramped and unpleasant, and only one in four U-Boat crewmen is Fated to survive World War Two. U-Boats are slow under water and must come up frequently to replenish their batteries, which must be charged by their diesel engines. They are typically equipped with torpedo tubes in the fore and aft. Treat torpedoes as self-propelled 500lb bombs that require incessant maintenance before launching.

Yamato: The largest battleship ever built, the Yamato is longer than most sky-scrapers are tall. It bristles with machineguns and artillery, including nine 18-inch cannon. It would take hundreds of enemy warships to sink this floating mega-weapon.

Zero: Although stripped of armor to keep it fast, light, and maneuverable, the A6M Zero has earned a fearsome reputation. It is armed with two machine-guns and two light cannon, and can be equipped with two 125lb bombs. Two 500lb bombs are welded to the underside for use in a Kamikaze attack.

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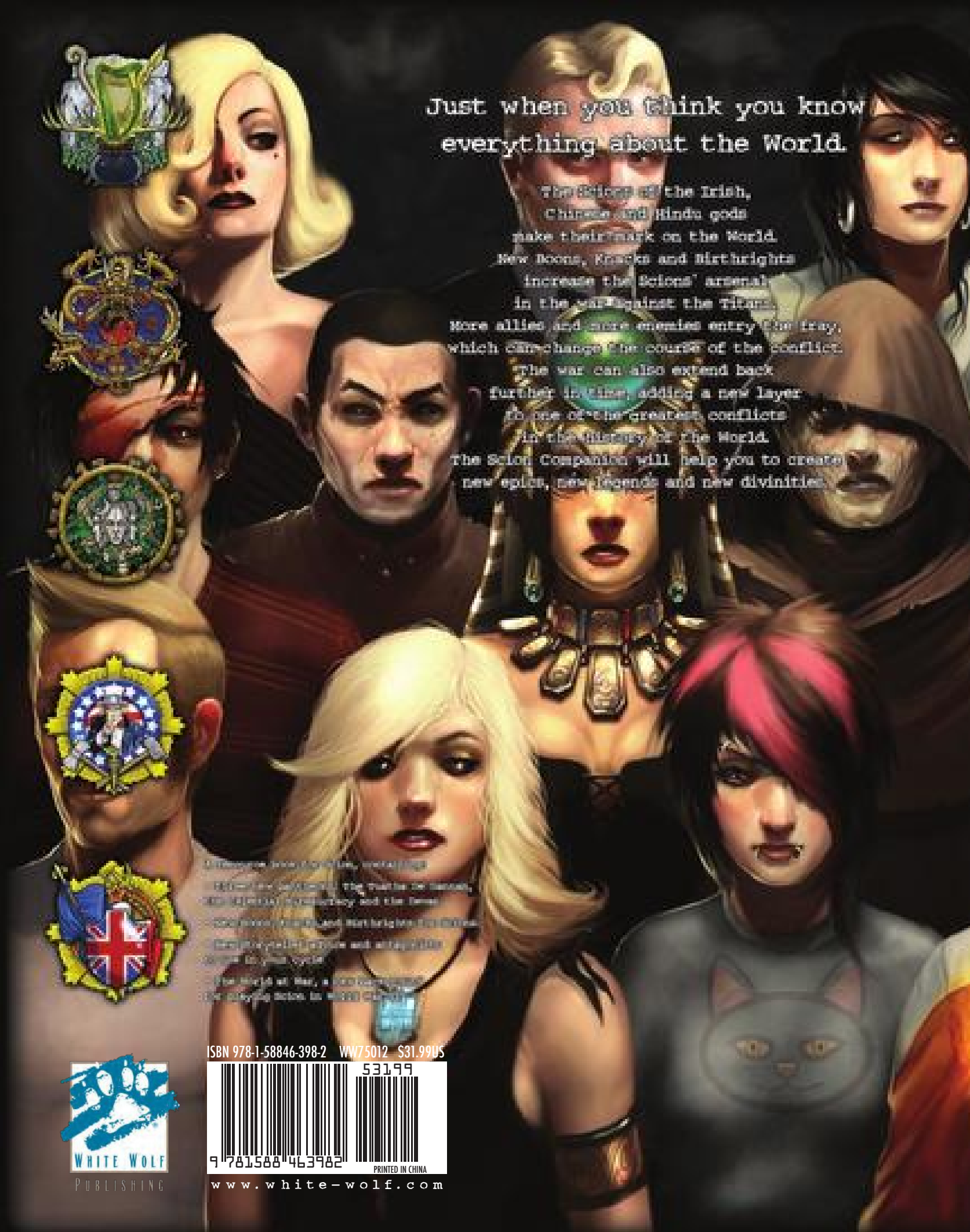
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